

the monthly record

September
2006

£1.00



www.freechurch.org

GEORGE REID'S ASSEMBLY ADDRESS
NOT QUITE HEAVEN IN HARRIS
BURDENS ARE LIFTED?
NEW CHURCH FINANCE MANAGER
GREYFRIARS FAMILY ESCAPE BEIRUT

Editor:

Alex J MacDonald
 14 Gilmour Road
 Edinburgh EH16 5NT
 Tel: 0131 667 4651
 Mobile: 07751 298046
 E-mail: record@freechurch.org

**Missions Editor:**

Calum Ferguson
 Free Church Offices
 The Mound
 Edinburgh EH1 2LS
 Tel: 0131 226 5286
 Email: calum@freechurchofscotland.org.uk

Gaelic Editor:

Janet MacPhail
 24 North Bragar,
 Isle of Lewis HS2 9DA
 Tel: 01851 710354

Policy: The views expressed in this magazine are those of the Editors and contributors, which are understood to reflect generally the theological position of the Free Church of Scotland. The magazine also publishes from time to time the Church's official policies and statements. No material can be published unless the full name and address of the contributor is supplied. The preferred method of submission is in electronic form. Otherwise, clearly typed copy is required.

Deadline: The Monday before the 1st of the month prior to the publication month.

Subscriptions: £15 prepaid for subscribers in UK. £24.50 prepaid for airmail. £18 surface mail. This includes postage. Any extra money received will be treated as a donation to the work of the Church.

Free Church Offices:

15 North Bank Street, Edinburgh, EH1 2LS.
 Tel: 0131 226 5286. Fax: 0131 220 0597.
 E-mail: offices@freechurchofscotland.org.uk

Cheques and correspondence relating to the supply of the magazine, and financial contributions for whatever purpose should be addressed to the Chief Administrative Officer. Correspondence on other matters should be addressed to the Convener of the Committee which deals with the matter.

Free Church Bookshop: 0131 718 4141

ISSN 0016-0334

Contents

- 3 Book Reviews
- 4 Not Quite Heaven in Harris
Anne Sanderson
- 6 The State We're In
George Reid
- 8 Burdens are lifted?
Alex J MacDonald
- 10 News
New Finance Manager
- 11 *From Beirut to Greyfriars*
Annie Soper Great Glen ride
- 12 *Tom Stewart's retirement*
Tragic crash deaths
- 13 *Two new ministers*
Spring Conference Report
- 14 Obituaries – Rev Calum Lamont,
Mr Kenneth Macleod, Mr Dan Morrison
- 16 From the Frontiers
- 20 Gaelic section
- 23 Congregational Remittances
- 24 Engaging with Society – CARE

Cover: Mr George Reid (see page 6)

Photograph: Roddy Mackay Photography

COMMUNION DATES

October

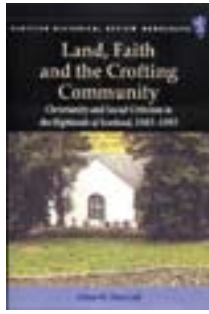
- 1st Glasgow-Govanhill; Glasgow-Dowanvale;
Back; Lochcarron; Fort William &
Kilmonivaig; Glenurquhart; Eddrachillis
- 8th Cross; Callanish; Gairloch; Cobham
- 15th Park; Kiltearn; Burghead; Greenock
- 22nd Glasgow-Partick; Dundee St Peter's;
Lochinver; Fearn; Resolis; Point
- 29th Ayr (Martyrs); Dunblane; Strathpeffer;
Nairn; Lairg; Tarbert; Dundee

Free Church Website—www.freechurch.org

- ◆ *The Monthly Record* online (pdf)
- ◆ Regular news updates
- ◆ Congregational details online
- ◆ Members Handbook
- ◆ Links to congregational websites
- ◆ Online Christian Library
- ◆ Today's Issues—David Robertson
- ◆ Book of the Month—Iain D Campbell

Land, Faith and the Crofting

Community. Christianity and Social Criticism in the Highlands of Scotland, 1843-1893. Allan W. MacColl. Edinburgh University Press. HB. 240 pages. £45 (but see special offer, p.12)



In the 19th Century, tens of thousands of people in the Highlands were evicted from their homes and forced to eke out an existence on the bare coasts or face emigration. This resulted in what became known as the Highland Land Question and culminated in the Crofters' War of the 1880s and the Crofters' Act of 1886.

There are several persistent myths about the Highland Clearances and their aftermath. One is that the Church, and ministers in particular, did not support the people in their struggles. MacColl tackles this myth head-on and completely demolishes it.

In this comprehensive, meticulously researched work (which is his Cambridge doctoral thesis), he examines a wide range of hitherto neglected evidence and shows the support of the Free Church in particular for the crofters from the early days of the potato famine through to the 1880s.

Another myth he manages to scotch is that any social concern on the part of ministers only came after they adopted liberal theological views. He shows this is completely false. Some of the strongest supporters of crofters' rights were Calvinist stalwarts like Gustavus Aird and John Kennedy.

If you were to read only one scholarly work on the Highland Land Question, I have no hesitation in saying this should be it.

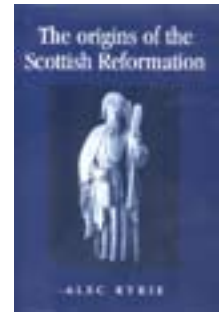
Allan MacColl attended Buccleuch Free Church for a time while a student in Edinburgh and is now studying for the Free Presbyterian ministry (in which we wish him blessing).

By way of a footnote, is it salutary to consider that in spite of the many efforts on the part of Church and State in the late 1800s to ameliorate the worst effects of the Clearances, much

of the Highlands today, such as the Strath of Kildonan, where I grew up, is more deserted now than at any time since the evictions of the early 1800s. No government, not even after promises made during the Great War, has restored such areas to the people. Recent legislation will not help, as there are few local people left to take advantage of it. It would appear that what was done, can never now be undone.

The Origins of the Scottish

Reformation. Alec Ryrie. Manchester University Press. HB. 218 pages. £55.



In some ways this is a maddening book—from the claim on the jacket to providing “the first full narrative of the question” (the origins of the Scottish Reformation), to the persistent use of “heretic” and “heresy” to describe Reformers and their views, to the scepticism afforded to Knox's contemporary history in comparison with other contemporary records.

Having said that, however, it is well worth reading. It is a mine of information from primary sources. And it gives some new insights into this pivotal event in Scottish history.

Nevertheless, I feel that Ryrie has missed the essence of the Reformation. While treating the various factors that contributed to what he calls “the Scottish Revolution”, he concludes that it was violence that was the deciding factor. This is wholly unsustainable. Undoubtedly there was violence (on both sides—that of the forces of Reformation and that of France and the Roman church). But this does not explain the completeness of the Scottish Reformation. Why was it that a small impoverished kingdom became ungovernable by one of the great political and military powers of the day? The answer surely is that a spiritual revolution had taken place—a revival. The views of the generality of the people had changed, and they were not going to submit again to either spiritual or political oppression. This was the Lord's doing.

The Editor

Large-print Sing Psalms

The Psalmody Committee is pleased to announce that a new printing of Sing Psalms has been produced. This is a large-print edition, intended for visually impaired people.

Special thanks are due to Rev John de la Haye, minister of Wick Free Church, for his perseverance in looking for the best ways of helping people with sight difficulties to enter fully into the worship of the congregation when God's praise is being sung. The Committee is also very grateful to his son, Samuel, who did all the hard work in preparing the computer file for printing and binding.

Inevitably a large-print edition is bulkier than one with normal print, and it is not always easy to decide what size of font, type of paper and binding are most suitable. However, the end result has impressed the Committee who hope it will prove acceptable to those who use it.

The type used is Arial Bold, 18 point (see title of this item).

The colour of the paper is off-white, to reduce the glare that could result from straight white. The book measures 9¼ x 7½ by ¾ inches, and it weighs 1 pound 5¾ ounces. (For comparison, the music editions of Sing Psalms weigh 1 pound 14½ ounces.) It is sturdily bound and has a firm paperback shiny cover.

The binding and printing have been done in the United States and the Committee have ordered a small quantity which will be available for purchase through the Free Church Bookshop. The exact price will depend on exchange rates, but it is expected that the selling price will be about £9.50 plus postage.

Depending on the demand, the Bookshop can order more copies. The Committee will welcome feedback from visually impaired people, from precentors, ministers and congregations, since the desire is to provide the best edition possible, while recognising that there is a wide variety of sight impairment and that no one edition will exactly meet the needs of all.

Together let us praise the Lord! (Psalm 34:3)

Not Quite Heaven In Harris

A Hebridean Holiday—Beyond Horizons



Article and photos by Anne Sanderson

Photos (from left to right): Scarista Bay; approach to Luskentyre beach; a lamb near Chapaval, Northton

We knew fairly well what sort of a springtime holiday we would have. Six years ago we began a three-years-on-the-trot stint of going to the Hebrides for a week at a time, followed by an equal term of visits to the far north mainland of Scotland. You may take it that we like Scottish holidays. We never go anywhere else. Furthermore, we live in Scotland. There's something about the place that keeps us anchored, and not unwillingly either. The only time we move is when the magnetic north pulls us. Ah, if only we could stay there. Being on holiday is, however, unlike staying in a place. This we know. It's great to get away from home, especially to visit new locations, yet it never takes long for the shine to wear off a place once problems of daily living (or nasty weather) take their inevitable hold.

On our fourth trip to the Hebrides we had some experience of nasty weather in springtime.

The third day of our two-week long holiday, we drove through a long-strung-out village en route to Stornoway. The wind and rain combined ferociously to daunt all but the most intrepid travellers. So, I was much surprised to see two ladies braving these elements without benefit of a car. It wasn't their attempt to walk up the hill, clutching one another and their hats for dear life that startled me. It was the sight of them leaning backwards as they were scooted uphill at a ridiculous angle that amazed me. Such was the force of the wind as it propelled them along! They—like us—must have been silly tourists. Locals would know better than to go out in a force nine gale!

A few days of bad weather was, however, more than off-set by good spiritual experiences. I had set off on this holiday with no sure prospects of spiritual contact with other Christians. The reasons for that lay out-with my control. I mentioned this to my sister who said she was praying that I would receive spiritual input during my fortnight's stay. Well, less than 24 hours after setting foot on the island of Harris, her prayers began to be answered!

After the long car drive and ferry crossing, we had arrived quite late at night at the self-catering cottage we'd booked online. There was only time to unpack and crash out. We had not

stayed in this area before. So, the following morning, Sunday, I arose, eager to explore our surrounds. The dogs shared my enthusiasm, dragging me down the path and on to the roadside where we turned left. It was only then that I saw the Lord's answer to my dear sister's prayers. Past an adjoining field, and aligned with the cottage, was a church. It was, literally, a stone's throw away! The sign by the road informed me that English services were held on alternate Sundays at 6 p.m. So, at the appointed hour I arrived and, yes, that Sunday was the English service! In I went, and how blessed the 20 or so of us were as the Church of Scotland minister preached on the significance of God's name. Furthermore, the following Sunday was to be a joint service and also in English, so my cup began to overflow. Honestly, if I had wished to contrive a more conveniently located holiday site to engage in Christian fellowship, I could not have succeeded better than that! Isn't the Lord lovely? Yet I, of little faith, could not even envisage a church on the horizon of my holiday. As with literal vision that was unable to see the mountains of Harris from Luskentyre beach, due to black rain clouds obscuring the background until the storm swept away, I was reminded of the need to see with eyes of faith. The church members' vision, however, was no doubt keener than mine for it was not until I returned to the cottage that I realised a scarf had been trailing behind the bottom edge of my jacket. It must have looked a touch ridiculous; they might have wondered if this was a new mainland fashion. Knowing the Gaelic hobby of giving people nicknames in Gaelic, I wondered wistfully if they might dream up something poetic that said, 'Anne of the flowing scarf.' Alas, they were more likely to come up with a quip like, 'Annie with the tail'. Sigh.

The next blessing was the opportunity to visit a family who had left the mainland church we attended to live in Lewis. We spent time with them one day, seeing their new house, and how the children had grown, and catching up on news. It was delightful to receive of their hospitality and to share fellowship, and to know their move was successful.

The third blessing came the following Sunday evening when

I walked the few yards to the church once more. It was pouring with rain and blowing cold. Inside, the small congregation had been bolstered by about 10 more souls for the joint service. In came the Associated Presbyterian minister, who solemnly addressed us on the topic of the resurrection at the time of Christ's second coming. The subject matter was truly uplifting, no matter the sonorous tones, helping us look up and beyond ourselves to coming glory.

The next day, when shopping in a nearby village, I spotted one of the C of S ladies, and, despite the trailing scarf now being properly located around my neck, she recognised me immediately. We fell into conversation and she warmly welcomed me to visit her any time. On the mainland, such cordial openness might have been viewed with suspicion, but here it was the most natural thing in the world, even between relative strangers. It was as if the oft-times cold, dark landmass could effectively diminish at sight of the glittering sea coming to view over the horizon. Such is the nature of Christian fellowship.

Holidays by the seaside usually invite customary practices, like paddling, or eating candy floss, or going down helter-skelters. I could have done a bit of paddling, but the prospect of frozen tootsies put me off. There were no Blackpool-type amusements to hand, and even if there had been candy floss, most of that would have wrapped itself around the purchaser's face long before the mouth got a look-in—such is the nature of Hebridean wind. However, an unexpected and childish pleasure presented itself in the grounds where the rented cottage stood. The owners had thoughtfully dug a circular pit, then placed a trampoline inside it so that the grass came level with the bouncy bit. No danger of children falling off from a height onto bumpy ground! One afternoon, when no-one was looking, I indulged my little self. Up and down I gaily bounced, giggling like a school-girl, and having great fun! I hadn't done such a thing since school days. Then, before I could take evasive action, a car swept up the drive towards the cottage. Oh, horrors! I had been seen! Ah well, I bounced on. The grown-ups inside the car could either frown or smile. I was having so much fun, I didn't really mind. They smiled. I waved. And as they got out their car, and I wobbled off the trampoline, the lady said, "I bet you feel drunk!" She was quite right. My knees refused to stop bending, and my head was all a' wobble. It made me laugh.

A few days later I did another silly tourist thing. We set off to walk around Toe Head, at Northton, and I noticed a little lamb bleating pitifully to its worried mother on the other side of a fence. I was told not to worry; sheep did that sort of thing all the time and the lamb would eventually get back to its mother. I hoped so, for the lamb wasn't very old, it was in a small, fenced field, all on its own, and the weather was bitterly cold and windy. We walked for well over an hour before heading back to the car. Nearing it, I looked out for that lamb. The wee thing was still frantically trying to get through the unyielding fence to its mother. So I took action. Into the field I went, the lamb nervously running away from me to the bottom corner. Ever so slowly, I crouched down, getting a bit closer, and a bit closer. The lamb's curiosity served to make it pause and look at this strange creature, just long enough for me to make a dart and grab it. Over the fence I lifted it—mother now right up close on the other side—and down the lamb went, straight to the milk bar. I'm sure the ewe bleated her grateful thanks! And I was glad, too, for within minutes a deluge began that would have been disastrous for a very small lamb, on its own, and without sustenance or warmth.

That might have been all, but late at night as I wrote up my diary, that episode served as a parable for me. "We all like sheep have gone astray" came to mind (to Handel's unwarrantedly jolly Oratorio tune—it ought to have been a dirge). And I reflected on the many times I have been like a silly sheep, going astray and getting into a pickle. There may be a way back that is transparently obvious to the onlooker (go back to the gap you went through) but from the sheep's point of view that opening no longer seems to exist. It's obscured and has effectively vanished, or is simply forgotten about. There are times when silly sheep need a hand. That's when the Good Shepherd comes in. He notices whenever one lamb strays, goes after it, and brings it safely home. It gave me pause for thought, and for thanks.

Our vision can be so limited, obscured too by life's storms, and we may feel hemmed in with no escape. Then swiftly, the clouds pass, or an opening suddenly appears out of the blue, and we see what lies beyond with clarity, or the way back, away from danger. It is the Lord's doing. And it is wonderful in our eyes. On a clear day, we can see forever. On a dark day, that vision remains for those with eternity in their hearts.



The State We're In George Reid

This year the Assembly had a historic visit from the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, Mr George Reid. The Moderator invited him to address the Assembly and his very interesting and thoughtful address, entitled "The State We're In", is here given in full.



In October 2004, at the official opening of Holyrood, it was the Free Church of Scotland which proclaimed, in the Chamber, the Word of God to our Queen and Members of Parliament...

*Mo shùilean togam suas—chum
Nam beann, on tig mo neart.
On Dia rinn talamh agus nèamh
Tha m'fhurtachd uile teachd*

... the wonderful words of verses 1 and 2 of Psalm 121, sung unaccompanied in Gaelic by the Rev Iain Campbell and members of the congregation of Back Free Church in Lewis.

*I to the hills will lift mine eyes;
from whence shall come my aid?
My help is from the Lord above
who heaven and earth hath made.*

I wanted, of course, Gaelic inside the Chamber—not out in the courtyard, as happened at the Assembly Halls five years earlier.

But I wanted more than that. I wanted more than a choir which had presented their unique Celtic sound in the churches of Alabama and the *Maison des Cultures du Monde* in Paris.

I wanted, I suppose, to stir souls and to honour the promise of Psalm 22—that “God inhabits the praise of the people”.

The Irish Consul General said that it was the most moving moment of his six years in Scotland.

A hardened journalist, not known for his love of the church, confessed that he felt the hairs moving on the back of his neck and concluded that “it must be genetic, I suppose”. He then went on to question how faith fits in the new Scotland... in the state we're in—in a devolved, globalised, and fast-changing society.

As Ithers See Us

Some of you will know that I spent a dozen years of my life in Geneva working for the International Red Cross.

When I was not off in some of the rougher corners of the earth in wars and disasters, I would go on Sundays to the

Auditoire de Calvin, the Scots kirk beside St Peter's Cathedral, where John Knox preached and planned his return home.

It was of course a multinational congregation. Africans, Americans, Canadians, Koreans, some Latin Americans, many fellow Scots all sharing the same Reformed legacy and traditions.

It's good sometimes to see oorsels as ithers see us. They saw Scotland as their spiritual home, the place which had shaped their values.

A country which, in the Dark Ages, had kept the light of faith burning in Iona and whose Celtic missionaries had helped re-Christianise Europe.

A country which, at the Reformation, had produced the People of the Book and welcomed the Good News of a free and sovereign salvation.

A nation with a strong work ethic, a passion for education, strong social and family values and a democratic belief that a man was as good as his master.

Fathers and brethren who, in the Disruption of 1843, would brook no state interference, nor any lord but God.

Faith Moves Mountains

On 18 May of that year, the Lord High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland, the Marquis of Bute, was holding a splendid levée at the Palace of Holyroodhouse. But the thoughts of those present were elsewhere—on what would happen when the General Assembly convened at St Andrew's Church in George Street in a few hours time.

The thought was that, faced with the certain loss of livelihood and home, only eighty or so Ministers would secede in support of the principle that lairds and landowners would not decide who preached from the pulpit.

As we know now, 470 of them—and twice as many elders—left in quiet dignity and marched to Tanfield Hall in Canonmills where, five days later, they signed the solemn Act of Separation and Deed of Demission captured for all time in

the extraordinary painting by David Octavius Hill which still graces your offices.

Faith can move mountains. Principle can capture the popular imagination. A refusal to “bow to Mammon”, as Thomas Chalmers put it, can release extraordinary energy.

Within two years the Free Church was constructing 500 new places of worship. 712 schools were opened by 1851. A Mission Board was active in Africa. And throughout large swathes of Scotland, the Highlands in particular, powerful preachers produced real spiritual renewal.

A Pluralist Scotland

Two years after the Disruption, however, something equally dynamic happened in Scotland’s story.

It was the *Gorta Mor*—the big hunger, the potato blight—in Ireland. And the threat of famine here too.

Mass immigration into Scotland and outward migration from Scotland changed this country for ever. It was the start of a process which brought many more Irish, Jews, Lithuanians, Poles and Russians here to become, in time, New Scots.

It was the start of a new pluralist Scotland, a place of different faiths, an enriching process in which all are born equal in dignity and rights. And in which all those who live and work among us, regardless of their origins, are entitled to call themselves Scots.

But it was never a process in which anyone should feel themselves pressurised to give up their basic beliefs.

A “Lost” Society

At your General Assembly last year your Moderator, in a long and elegant address, told a tale of two statues. One, in New College yard, of John Knox, Bible in hand, preaching the Good News. The other of David Hume in the High Street, a blank Tablet in hand, radiating informed scepticism.

One representing the Evangel and the other the Enlightenment.

Both traditions are part of our national psyche as Scots. And there are other traditions too—Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Moslem, to name only some.

Does that mean some lowest common denominator, a melting pot of morality in which everything is much the same for everyone, everywhere, all the time?

I most certainly hope not. That certainly would mean that we live in the lost society identified by your Moderator—a country in which we have nothing to say about the breakdown of traditional family life, the widespread abuse of alcohol and drugs, abortion, the alienation of many of our young people.

It would mean that we are in a truly hopeless state.

A Too Timid Church

Jesus lived in a time of transition too, a society of many voices.

He engaged in dialogue with the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Romans but he did so as the Son of God. He castigated the unrighteous or took flails to the moneylenders in the Temple.

There’s a curious view that consensus politics means reducing everything to a meaningless mush. It means no such thing. It means a willingness to dialogue, to engage, to listen to the different voices, but never, ever, to give up on fundamental beliefs.

There are times when I find the church far too timid. Times when I look for, in the words of the mediaeval chronicler, “more tumultuous priests”.

The Free Church of Scotland has every right to speak out on family values, on sex and violence in the cinema, on alcohol abuse, on the abuse of children, on abortion, on stem-cell research.

Indeed, you have a God-given duty to do so. And you too have a constituency to represent.

Yes, church attendance has dropped substantially. But 570,000 Scots still go regularly to church and up to half the population on a few occasions throughout the year. And in parishes in the Western Isles and Lochalsh weekly attendance is over 40%, with most Ministers confident of substantial growth.

The downturn is far less serious than it is for membership of political parties. If politicians could get these sorts of figures, they would be in seventh heaven.

A State of Engagement

When I was an MP at Westminster I was deeply unhappy that the only way to be sure of a seat in the Commons was to go to Prayers. I was unhappy too that I had to pray according to the forms of the Church of England, facing the wall in a strange 17th century custom in case my sword punctured the Member on the bench behind.

At Holyrood, we have Time for Reflection. Each faith group represented according to its numbers of adherents.

The Free Church has its place and, with vigour and clarity, has presented its Biblical message of Good News and Sovereign Salvation.

Time for Reflection is only one such instance of the readiness of the Scottish Parliament to engage with all believers. On all Bills, there is the opportunity to state a case in writing, often followed up by oral evidence. Every evening there are cross-party groups ready and willing to listen to different perspectives. All MSPs are on line and can be asked for their views on virtually every subject by letter or email.

I think Thomas Chalmers and those who walked from George Street to Canonmills would have approved. This is not the state telling the church what to do. This is the state inviting the church in to make its beliefs publicly known and to influence policy.

A separation of powers but a confluence of interest.

There is a helpful little plaque tucked away in a corner of the Auditoire de Calvin in Geneva. Under the heading *L’Eglise Reformé*, there is the Latin sub-text, *Semper Reformanda*.

In other words, not a church which has gone through a single process of reform, but a church which is reforming itself all the time.

A church which is committed not just to the spirituality of its adherents, but to the spirituality of society.

A church which does not seek to preserve a world which has gone, but to Christianise the world in which it lives, now, today, this very moment.

Moderator and Friends, I bring you the best wishes of the Scottish Parliament in all your deliberations. Thank you for inviting me to join you as Presiding Officer. May you have a fruitful General Assembly.



Burdens are lifted?

The retiring Moderator, Alex J MacDonald, preached at the opening service of the General Assembly on Galatians 6:2,5—“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ... for each one should carry his own load.”

Last year, in my address to the Assembly, I tried to indicate something of our message to the world—*Hope for a Lost World*. Tonight at the opening of this Assembly I want to focus on the message of God’s Word to us as the Church.

The world is in a mess, and God has given us the exact remedy the world needs: the Good News about Jesus. We believe in that remedy. We preach that remedy. And yet we see so little result, so little success. Of course there are bright spots. But the overall picture is one of decline—decline in every denomination, and decline amongst ourselves. Why is that?

No doubt there are many reasons. Most of the Bible is in the first instance addressed to Christians and to the Christian Church, and both Old Testament and New Testament are full of God’s words of warning and critique and even judgement to the Church. It therefore ill becomes us to be so critical of the world around us, while at the same time being so uncritical of ourselves: “Judge not, lest you be judged” and “If we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgement”. It is not the world that God will hold accountable for the failure to evangelise Scotland—it is his Church, of which the Free Church is a part.

It is impossible to address all the possible reasons for our lack of impact on our communities. But I want to highlight two areas: Community and Individual Responsibility, and the Biblical emphasis that it is both-and, not either-or.

We see these two emphases in the passage we read: “Carry each other’s burdens” (v.2)—that’s community; and “each one should carry his own load” (v.5)—that’s individual responsibility.

Now, these two may seem contradictory—an example of what critics may point out as evidence of illogicality in the Bible. But, as so often in the Christian life, we are being presented here with two things which must be kept in tension. Another example is the case of divine sovereignty and human freedom. These are apparently contradictory. But we know from science that there can be two apparently contradictory ways of looking at the same thing—the phenomenon of light is regarded both

as waves and particles.

Here we see another of these paradoxical doubles—individuality and community—apparently contradictory, but actually complimentary.

The world around us will try to force us to take sides—for instance in politics, Conservatives may emphasise individuality, and Socialists community.

As Christians we can often be guilty of making this false choice. Either we lay all the emphasis on community and fellowship and supporting one another, or we lay all the emphasis on standing on your own feet and taking responsibility for yourself.

There is however “an absent corollary”. We might think that the necessary implication of divine sovereignty is that human choice is emptied of significance, but the Bible does not teach that. Or that human freedom means that God’s will leaves things uncertain, but again the Bible does not teach that.

Similarly here—we might think that because it says each of us should carry our own load, then that means we should tell others they should bear their own burdens, or that carrying others’ burdens means we can tell others they should bear our load. But the Bible does neither. These two are complimentary, and in a healthy church we will see both in operation.

These are two great Biblical principles of Community and Individuality—and they have a range of applications to many of the difficulties we confront.

Community

We are told that carrying each other’s burdens fulfils the law of Christ. What is the law of Christ? There is no doubt about that. “A new commandment I give you: love each other as I have loved you” (John 13:34). How has Christ loved us? And how does he love us still?

He bore our burdens (our sins). “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24). This is absolutely unique. He, and he alone, made atonement for sin. But this also has a relevance to us loving as he has loved us.

Negatively, we must not increase the burden of sin and guilt of others. Jesus said of religious leaders in his day, “And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them” (Luke 11:46). This can be done by adding to God’s word as the Pharisees did—making people feel guilty over things neither commanded nor forbidden in the Bible. But although we might not be guilty of the actual error of legalism, we ministers in particular may indulge in a scolding, hectoring style of preaching. (There is a place for scolding—but always!?) Have we a tendency to always looking on the dark side, seeing only the mess society is in, and the mess people’s lives are in, and not the good gifts of God’s creation and grace and in people’s lives?

Positively, sin is a great burden, and repentance, forgiveness and restoration lift that burden. We are in the business of lifting burdens—we have Good News! Every sermon, all our activities, must major on the grace of God. We must be overwhelmed and delighted and amazed by God’s love.

In Galatians 6:1 the importance of restoration is stressed: “Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.” Restoration is not something we are good at. Sometimes people have drifted away from the church, perhaps because they have become out of sympathy for one reason or another. Sometimes people have even to be formally disciplined. But we find it hard to remember that one of the great aims of all discipline is to restore the offender. The word translated “restore” is used of setting a broken bone or of mending nets. That is indicative of the great, positive enterprise of restoration. We are told to restore gently. This word is often translated “meekly” and it derives from the idea of a horse that is trained or “broken”. It does not mean any kind of weakness or softness, but implies great strength under control. We must also realise our own vulnerability: “Watch yourself or you also may be tempted”.

In addition, Jesus relieves us of our burdens: “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows” (Isaiah 53:4, Matt. 8:17); “Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28); “Cast your cares on him, for he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:6).

Many are bearing burdens of anxiety and care—not only individuals, but congregations and their ministers and office-bearers. This can be true in small, isolated, struggling congregations. We have put ministers into these situations and we have said to them and to their congregations—“Get on with it! Go on yersel!” This is utterly unrealistic. In Scotland about 10% of the population may attend church, but we put a minister into a community of 1,000 people (even smaller), with 2,3 or 4 other denominations there—and expect him and his people to have a viable congregation! It is cruel! We are overburdening.

This also has a knock-on effect on the larger congregations. They have the responsibility of supporting the smaller congregations (“bearing each other’s burdens”). But it is not working! Our smaller congregations are dwindling and our large congregations are not growing. Paul said (2 Cor.8:13): “Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality”. In our present system everyone is hard pressed and no one is relieved!

The only help that is generally given is money. And money is not providing the answer. It is just perpetuating a situation that is making the church weaker and weaker. The smaller congregations are not getting the support they need, and the larger congregations are unable to establish the kind of pastoral and administrative teams that are necessary for them to grow and develop into the kind of churches that are going to make a real impact in their large communities. The result is that ministers and office-bearers in these large congregations are often overburdened too. Often they are given heavy denominational responsibilities as well.

Jesus relieves our burdens. We must imitate him, we must be his instruments. He is concerned for us: “He was moved with compassion when he saw the crowds harassed and helpless” (Matt. 9:36); “He sympathises with us in our weaknesses” (Hebrews 4:15). We must be concerned about those who are overburdened.

In addition, he lived among us: “he was tempted in all points as we are” (Hebrews 4:15). He lived in our shoes. If we lived for one day in the shoes of the ministers or congregations we may be critical of, we might realise the burdens they are carrying!

Jesus also listens to us. He hears our cry. We too must listen to what people are saying. Jesus acts for us. He works for our good. This is so often where we fall down. We must act before it is too late—act to relieve the burdens. “Let us do good to all people, especially to the family of believers” (v.10).

What can we do? The answer is not abandoning the smaller congregations to dwindle away to nothing. The answer I believe is in team ministry—in the sparsely populated Highlands and Islands as well as in the cities and large towns. It is Biblical. Jesus got a team together—the Twelve. Paul didn’t work on his own.

Team ministry does not mean just pastoral teams. We need administrative workers too. “Gifts of administration” are among the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:28). This lifts burdens off the preachers and pastors. We can also use technology: already DVD’s of sermons are being used successfully.

So, there is an obligation on us to love as Christ loved—to lift burdens, not increase them—thus expressing the community we have in Christ.

Individuality

Paul also emphasises individual responsibility: “Each one should carry his own load” (v.5).

Human individuality derives from the fact that we are made in the image of God. Each life is precious and significant. We have amazing gifts and capacities. We also have individuality. It is revealed that the persons of the Trinity have individual characteristics: the Father begets the Son (Fatherhood); the Son is begotten (Sonship); the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son. The consequence is that each Person has an individual role: the Father sends the Son into the world; the Son achieves our redemption; and the Holy Spirit applies the benefits of redemption. Human beings are created in the image of this God—the God of individuality.

It follows that we have personal responsibility. What we do has significance, and God holds us accountable. One day we will have to answer—“a man reaps what he sows” (v.7). The old spiritual goes:

“You’ve got to walk that lonesome valley.

*You've got to walk there by yourself.
And no one here can walk there for you.
You've got to walk there by yourself."*

There is another dimension to this. We are to act as Christ acted, to love as he loved. He loved us by taking personal responsibility for the burden that the Father had given him. No one else could do that. It was up to him.

You too must take responsibility. You must take responsibility for your salvation. Joshua said, "Choose this day whom you will serve". Jesus asked, "But who do you say I am?" Paul said, "Let a man examine himself". You must also take responsibility for your service of Christ. Jesus replied to Peter's query about John, "What is that to you? You follow me!"

And so, "Each one should carry his own load" (v.5). Jesus gives us a personal load to carry: "Take my yoke... for my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:30).

There is a certain proper pride (v.4) in discharging one's responsibility—a glory, not a false pride ("thinking himself something when he is nothing", v.3). When Paul says that we should not compare ourselves to others, he is talking about this false pride, not about learning from the examples of others (he often even encourages people to follow his own example).

One of our commonest human faults is not taking responsibility. Ever since Adam blamed Eve, and Eve the Serpent, we have been adept at passing the buck! "It wisnae me!" We can even use our communal responsibilities ("bearing each other's burdens") as an excuse. Because everyone is responsible, nobody does anything.

There's a little story about four people called Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody:

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

We can't pass the buck! You cannot blame others for everything! So often we say "the Church" or "the Presbytery" or "the Committee" or just "Them". It's somebody else's fault! We have to grow up and shoulder our responsibilities!

We are facing challenges in our congregations, and a challenge to the continuing viability and effectiveness of the Free Church itself. We must rise to that challenge, by each individually taking responsibility for his or her part.

Inaction is killing us. It may come from disillusionment, false humility, false theology or just downright laziness! Maybe many are overburdened, but others are under-burdened—and perhaps we are all under-burdened in some ways!

If you agree that the present situation in the Church is intolerable, then you must take action. It's no good saying, "The Church should do something", "Edinburgh must do something" or "the Presbytery must do something". In the particular frame of responsibility God has given you, you are the Free Church! Just do it! And don't give up!

There are these twin great principles in the Bible: Community and Individual Responsibility—"Carry each other's burdens" and "Carry your own load". We must take both of these seriously and take them equally seriously. In this as in every other area, our Lord is our example. "Love each other, as I have loved you."

NEWS

Revolving doors in the Free Church Offices



We are delighted to announce the appointment of Mr Jonathan Innes as the new Finance Manager for the Free Church. Jonathan will fill the post vacated by Mr Norman Campbell who has given sterling service as the Church's Accountant over the past five years.

Jonathan, a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, joins the Free Church Offices staff from Glasgow-based accountants Cook & Co where he held the position of Manager. He has extensive accounting experience gained from working with several firms of chartered accountants and has considerable experience of providing accounting services to the charity sector.

Married to Jillian, with two children and a third on the way, Jonathan currently lives in Glasgow and worships in Victoria Evangelical Church, but is hoping to relocate closer to Edinburgh to take up his new post. He is well acquainted with the Free Church as a result of attending many services in the Strathpeffer congregation with his grandmother, Jessie Mackenzie, Knockfarrel. His father and mother, Neil and Barbara, will also be known to many from their time with the Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association (SASRA).

We are delighted that Jonathan has felt led to use his skills and experience in full-time Christian service and, in particular, that he has agreed to join us in the Free Church Offices. We are confident that with the qualities he possesses, he will be a valuable asset to the Church and that his previous experience leaves him well placed to help us meet the challenges presented by new legislation and accounting regulations.

As Jonathan takes up his position, Norman Campbell prepares to leave for a well-earned retirement. When Norman first joined the Offices staff, it was intended that he would provide cover for a 10-month period. However, he became such a vital part of the Church's central administration that 10 months turned into five years. Norman's energy and enthusiasm for the work of the Church are evident for all to see, and his support to the various Church committees and boards, as well as to the previous General Treasurer and to the Chief Administrative Officer has been invaluable. We wish Norman every blessing for his well-earned retirement.

*Rod Morrison
Chief Administrative Officer*

Greyfriars Stratherrick family evacuated from Beirut

Andy and Fiona Gleeson, and their two children, Christina (4) and Bethany (2½) found themselves caught up in the spiralling violence that followed Israel's response to the kidnap of their soldiers and rocket attacks by Hizbollah, the Syrian backed militia.

Fiona had taken the children on a holiday visit their father to Nabatiyah in south Lebanon. Andy, a former bomb disposal officer, is the south Lebanon Technical Operations Manager for mine clearance charity MAG (Mines Action Group). As Israel's bombing threatened the Gleeson's safety they were taken under armed guard to Beirut. Here, as Israeli bombs destroyed the airport, electricity supply and suspected Hizbollah locations, they anxiously awaited evacuation to Limassol, Cyprus.

Because the Gleesons were accommodated the same hotel as many UK journalists their story was widely featured in the press and on TV. The family was safely evacuated to Cyprus, by Royal Navy destroyer and arrived back in Inverness on Saturday 22nd July.

It was great to be able to welcome them back to Greyfriars, in person, on the following Sunday. By interesting coincidence we also had staying with us that weekend the mother of the soldier



responsible for organising the Limassol end of the evacuation process.

Andy wrote the following letter to Greyfriars Stratherrick Congregation expressing the family's appreciation for the prayerful support they received during their difficult and frightening time.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the congregation of Greyfriars Stratherrick Free Church of Scotland and those from around the world whose prayers brought us safely home to Inverness. It was comforting to us at a time when our need was at its greatest.

We feel blessed to have returned safely, and are now settling back to some normality although we will never forget our experience in Lebanon, and how quickly we found ourselves embroiled in the troubles. The children have recovered and settled back into home life. Although now safely back in Inverness we cannot help but feel for the people of Lebanon

with whom I have had the pleasure of working and who were so kind to us throughout our shortened visit. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Lebanon and Israel at this difficult time.

So it came as a shock for Fiona to learn last week that it would be necessary for Andy to return to Lebanon. After little more than week at home he flew out of Inverness on the evening of Monday 31st July to commence his return journey to Beirut, via Cyprus. He told us that there are many more mines and unexploded ordnance waiting to be dealt with in order to make the south of Lebanon safe, as soon as a cessation of the current hostilities would make this possible. Once again, the Greyfriars church family invites you to pray for Fiona at home in Inverness with the girls and for Andy's safety as he once again takes up his responsibilities in Lebanon.

John Ross

Annie Soper Great Glen Ride



On Monday 5th June, John Ross (right) and David Livingstone, from the Inverness Greyfriars Stratherrick congregation, set out from Fort William to ride the Great Glen Cycle Way to raise funds for the Annie Soper School in Moyobamba, Peru. They arrived in Inverness three days later after completing the gruelling 80+ mile mountain bike trail.

On 14th September an eleven strong Greyfriars' team travels to Peru to help with the Annie Soper School building project where their main task will be to dig foundations for the toilets and a kitchen. David MacPherson, the minister of Moyobamba Presbyterian Church, informs us that a 'back-of-the-envelope' estimate for the building of the toilet and kitchen is c.£6,000. The team

would like to raise the total cost of this part of the project. If congregations and individuals continue to give generously towards the Annie Soper School fund the upwardly revised target figure seems achievable. Any surplus funds will be donated to the Annie Soper bursary fund to help poorer parents afford a Christian education for their children.

The team expresses its warm thanks for the generous sponsorship received from many individuals and congregations of the Free Church. Among the generous donations received was £350 from children in Stornoway who had organised their own sponsored cycle ride.

Visit www.greyfriarschurch.org for further information and pictures of the ride.

Urray and Strathconon

Retirement of Mr Tom Stewart, Congregational Treasurer

Those who are office-bearers in any congregation are often taken for granted. None more so than the Congregational Treasurer. We are accustomed to hearing intimations from the Treasurer or appeals for money. We accept these and give little thought to the task which is his. But it is a heavy task, one which is with him throughout the year, week in week out. This was brought home to the Urray and Strathconon Congregation when it was announced that Tom Stewart was resigning from the Treasurership.

Tom had been Treasurer for almost 20 Years, first as unofficial assistant to his predecessor, Alastair Fraser, and thereafter for the next 17 years bearing the burden alone. Well no! He had an unofficial yet never absent assistant in the person of Jean, his wife. This was all revealed at the Annual Congregational meeting in March when the



congregation met to honour Tom and Jean for their long years of service. Warm tribute was paid to his untiring efforts to manage the finances day by day throughout each year. It was a never ending job to ingather funds and control the finances and it was acknowledged that he did it meticulously. His annual financial statements were a model and he was always at pains to explain them in detail. Mrs Ettie Mackenzie presented Tom with two paintings which they had chosen from the work of a well known local artist, Helen Leslie, and a basket of flowers for Jean.

In reply Tom thanked the congregation for their kindness and regaled us with some of his experiences and we could sense that he was retiring with a no uncertain sense of regret. He had to reorganise his sun-lounge which for all those years was the Treasurers desk. It was good to have his son and daughter and his sister present. And also his successor, Donald Macdonald.

Tom already retired as Headmaster of Tarradale School, and now he has notched up another retirement. He does so with the sincere thanks of the congregation."

John O Sutherland

Tragic deaths of Peruvian teenagers and former Rector of Fortrose Academy

Two teenage boys from the Colegio San Andres (St Andrew's School) in Lima, Peru, were tragically killed in a road accident just outside Inverness on Monday 31st July. The driver of the car in which they were travelling, Mr Donald W MacLeod, died of a heart attack. The boys who died were Carlos Ruben Gonzales (15) and Gianmarco Stefano Peschiera (14).

The boys were part of a group of 12 students and two teachers on a visit to

Scotland jointly organised by the School and the Free Church of Scotland. They had recently been attending Free Church Youth Camps and since then were staying with families in the Inverness area. They were due to meet up with the rest of the group at Knockbain Free Church for a trip to the Isle of Lewis. We understand that both the boys were committed Christians.

Mr Donald MacLeod (82), Drumossie Avenue, Inverness, was a former rector of Fortrose Academy and a member of Knockbain Free Church. He led a very active life, much involved in church and local community, and will be sorely missed.

Our hearts go out to the families of the young people and of Mr MacLeod. It is particularly sad that these teenagers should die so far from home and in what they would have regarded as a very safe environment compared to their home city. We continue to pray for the Lord's compassion on those so suddenly bereaved. We are very grateful for the support given to the rest of the group by their headmaster, Mr Donald MacAulay, and teacher Elma Armstrong, and by local people in the Inverness area and later in Edinburgh.

Special Offer on New Book

Land, Faith and the Crofting Community by Allan W. MacColl (see review on page 3) is a groundbreaking new book that throws fresh light on the role of the churches in the Scottish Highlands in the aftermath of the Clearances and up to the end of the Crofting Wars.

Special Price for Free Church Monthly Record readers: £29.99 (RRP £45.00)—one-third off published price—Free UK postage and packing with this offer.

To order, send a cheque (payable to Marston Book Services) with your delivery details to:

FCMR offer,
Edinburgh University Press,
22 George Square,
Edinburgh EH8 9LF

Or telephone 0131 650 4220.

Free Church College

A Partner Institution
of the University of
Glasgow

The Opening Service for
Session 2006/07 will be held
in the College on Monday, 4
September 2006 at 7.30 pm.

The address will be given by
Professor John R McIntosh.

All are welcome.

Two new ministers

Western Isles
Presbytery
license Iain
T Campbell
(left) and Colin
Macleod



The Rev Iain Torquil Campbell (Point) and the Rev Colin Macleod (Back) were licensed to preach by the Western Isles Presbytery of the Free Church at a service held in Stornoway Free Church in June. Iain is a former Harris Tweed weaver and Colin a former social worker. The encouraging sermon by the Rev Iver Martin, Moderator

of the Presbytery, was taken from Matthew 10 on the instructions which Jesus gave to his disciples. Tea was provided for the large congregation in the adjacent M A Macleod Memorial Hall. At the time of writing, Mr Macleod has just been inducted to the Leith Congregation and Mr Campbell was due to be inducted to Gravir

Spring Conference 2006



The Spring Conference was held this year from 7 to 9 April at the Aviemore Inn—the same venue as last year. Weather was wintry, and numbers were down a little, but spirits and expectations were high as we gathered to hear Neil MacMillan's opening address on the subject "Building the Kingdom of God".

Neil based his two expositions on Ephesians chapter 4. God's grand design is to restore unity to the church, mirroring the unity of the Godhead, and to make the church on earth a paradigm for the entire universe. Our part—and this is the responsibility of every member—is to use the gifts God has given us to build up a mature church, growing in love and in the knowledge of God.

The other main speaker was Pastor Geoff Thomas from Aberystwyth, whose theme was "Serving God in the World". His theme was also derived from Ephesians—this time chapter 5 verse 1: "Be imitators of God". To imitate God we must first know God, and then serve him in the world by displaying his image and attributes in every area of our lives. We learn about God's attributes—in particular his sense of order and rationality, his desire to communicate, his personality, his kindness and goodness—from creation, from history, from Scripture which interprets creation and history, and above all from Jesus who is the image and glory of God.

Besides the formal addresses, the conference followed the usual pattern of worship, discussion and informal praise

and prayer. Singing was a marked feature this year, and many of the new versions of the Psalms, with new tunes, were learned and enjoyed. We had a lively missionary session led by Duncan and Christine Peters (Duncan also conducted the Family Service) and heart-warming testimonies from a younger and an older conference member.

The Spring Conference, with its Highland setting, its comfort and fellowship, as well as its challenges, proved as enjoyable as ever, and we are grateful to the speakers and organisers, notably Maretta Sangster, who helped to make it so. Next year (30 March to 1 April) we look forward to the ministry of Professor Ted Donnelly from Northern Ireland.

D G Mackay

Rev. Malcolm Lamont

23.5.1916 – 5.6.2006



Rev. Malcolm Lamont (or Calum Lamont as he was generally known) was born on 23rd May 1916 in Glenconon, Uig, Skye. He was the second son of four children born to John Angus and Catherine Lamont. After attending primary school in Uig, where his mother and aunt were both teachers, he went for his secondary schooling to Portree. During this time he came to faith after being challenged by the text, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Pet. 4:18).

After secondary schooling he went to Glasgow University to begin studies in veterinary medicine. He told the story of a Skye elder who, on learning of this decision, said, "I thought Calum would become a physician of souls, and not a doctor of horses." And indeed, shortly thereafter, he changed his course of study, and, with a view to entering the ministry, undertook an Arts degree at Edinburgh University. There he gained distinction in his studies, particularly those pursued under the great Celtic scholar, Professor William J Watson. This stood him in good stead in later years in his Gaelic preaching.

After studying at the Free Church College from 1938 to 1941, where he displayed particular aptitude in the biblical languages, he was ordained and inducted to Stoer in Assynt in August 1941. That year saw an exceptional number of students graduating from the College, and five of them were

inducted to charges in Sutherland. Stoer in particular welcomed its minister as the charge had been vacant since 1929.

In 1944, while at Stoer, Calum married Johan Macdonald whose family home was close to the manse. Four children were born to them during this period. At this time most of his pastoral work was carried out using a bicycle, and he became a well-known and well-loved figure in the community. Throughout his ministry Calum remained a diligent scholar with a retentive memory and an encyclopaedic knowledge of Scripture and evangelical literature. His preaching was much appreciated both in Stoer and further afield at the many communion seasons to which he was invited.

Calum was an accomplished precentor, especially in Gaelic, and was also diligent in encouraging others in psalm singing. While in Stoer he set up psalmody classes there and in Elphin, and both were well-attended. This encouragement of good psalm singing continued throughout his subsequent ministry.

In January 1950 he was translated to the charge of Urquhart (Ferintosh), where he ministered for eighteen years to a large congregation with a substantial Sunday School. During this time three more children were added to the manse family. Calum continued to build up an extensive library which was well used in his careful sermon preparation.

Calum retained his early interests in animals and crofting, making good use of the Ferintosh glebe, something which enabled him to relate well to the farming community in the area.

Visitors would come from far and wide to attend the communion services at Ferintosh Burn, and on one occasion four great-grandsons of the renowned MacDonald of Ferintosh were among the guests in the manse.

In 1968 Calum went to serve as a locum in St Columba's Church of Scotland, Stornoway. This was a short but fruitful ministry before he returned to the church of his birth and accepted a call from the Duthil and Moy congregation in February 1969.

In the summer of 1971 Calum was inducted to the charge of Plockton and Kyle in the Presbytery of Lochcarron, where significant blessing was bestowed through his preaching. This period was also marked by the warmth of relationships that developed between the various denominations in the area. In 1975-76 he had the opportunity to minister to the Free Church congregation in

Detroit. His ministry in Plockton and Kyle continued until he retired in March 1988.

There were certain themes which Calum often returned to in his ministry. The love of God in giving His Son for us was a continual source of wonder to Calum and of material for his sermons. He felt a special affinity with the apostle Paul and delighted to preach from his letters and life. His messages would be interspersed with memorable illustrations and quotations from hymns and men like McCheyne, Rutherford and Newton. He was especially concerned to help people through spiritual trials and times of soul-searching, and sought in pulpit and visiting to apply the gospel sympathetically and personally.

In retirement Calum and Joan moved to Inverness and the Free North congregation. Still enjoying a good measure of health he was able to continue preaching for several years, being a mainstay of supply for Gaelic services in the area. With his long experience of ministry, his advice to visiting student preachers and indeed those who had practised the art of preaching for some time, was incisive and appropriate. It would be accompanied with the recommendation of a book, or even the gift of a precious volume from his personal library.

He retained many friendships from the various congregations he had served, delighting in the visits of friends and the opportunity to catch up on news. Those who were able to visit him in his last weeks in hospital still received an enthusiastic welcome, and the many cards, letters and assurances of prayer meant much to him. Having been accustomed to comforting others in hospital it was a difficult trial to find himself hospitalised, at 90 years old, for the first time since he was 6 months old!

Calum was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. Undoubtedly the greatest trial of his life was the untimely death of his son Angus. He felt that he never fully recovered from this blow, but often spoke of his thankfulness for the love and support of his family through this loss. Their love was surely a reciprocating of the love and support he and his wife had displayed and provided for the family over the years. In their fresh loss we now as a Church extend to them our love, sympathy and prayers, thankful for the sacrifices they made to enable Calum to devote himself for so long as a fruitful minister of the gospel and a physician of souls.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you

the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." Heb. 13:7-8

*R.M. Rankin,
with thanks to the Lamont family and
Rev. R.G. Mackay.*

Kenneth Macleod, Elder, Sleat and Strath



It was with great sadness the congregation of Sleat and Strath Free Church learned of the passing of their esteemed elder Kenneth Macleod on the 27th of April 2006 aged 83 years. Kenny (commonly known as Kenny Piper) was born in Stornoway in 1923. Shortly afterwards the family moved to Aignish in the Point district of the Isle of Lewis. This was to be Kenny's home for the next forty years. Kenny had the privilege of being brought up in a Christian home, something that had a profound influence on his life. Like most of his generation Kenny was called up during the 2nd World War and served his country in the Royal Navy. After the war ended Kenny secured employment in the retail trade with the S.C.W.S. firstly as a van driver and latterly as a manager. In 1949 Kenny married Mary Anne Munro from Laxdale Isle of Lewis and they had 3 of a family. Kenny was converted in December 1957 during a period of revival in the Point district when many people were converted.

The family moved to Skye in 1964 when Kenny was appointed manager of the S.C.W.S. in Broadford. It was here he came under the preaching of the late Rev Jack Morrison and shortly thereafter publicly professed faith in Christ. Then on the 4th of June 1972 Kenny was ordained an elder in the Strath Free Church. When the Kishorn Oil Yard opened up in the nineteen eighties,

Kenny became the bus driver transporting all the Skye and Lochalsh based workers. This was one of the happiest periods of his life giving him an opportunity to witness for his Lord (which was a mark of his life). Several people came to know the Lord at this time through services that Kenny instigated at the camp. On retirement, instead of returning to his beloved homeland of Lewis, Kenny remained in Skye for the rest of his days, feeling that this was the corner of His vineyard the Lord had allotted him. Kenny was such a presence in the Church that his passing has left a great void. He was always there to greet any who attended with a warm welcome. Kenny also was an able preacher, preaching his last sermon in this world on the 29th of January 2006 at the age of 82. His presenting was legendary throughout the Western Isles in Gaelic and English. We give thanks for the zeal he showed for the things of the Lord, now he has entered into his rest with the 'well beloved'. His parting words were often "keep that banner flying". Our dear friend is sadly missed, and we express our condolences to all the family.

Kerry Stewart

Dan Morrison, elder, Stornoway

On the 28th November 2005 the Kirk Session and congregation of Stornoway Free Church were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Donald Morrison, aged 84 years.

Donald (or Dan as he was more popularly known) was born in Dell, Ness in 1921 but moved to Galson when he was 3 years old. He was the eldest of a family of seven, all of whom he outlived except one. After leaving school he became a labourer until called up to the RAF regiment. In 1943 he was shot and captured by enemy forces on the island of Kos. When he was found he was so badly injured an enemy soldier almost killed him thinking him too severely wounded to survive. By a remarkable feature of providence which Dan was to reflect upon often during the years that followed, the soldier in question decided to spare his life and he survived. Meanwhile though, news reached home that Dan was missing presumed dead and wakes were held in respect of his "death".

On his return from the second world war Donald trained as a joiner. However, it was not long before his mobility was significantly

affected by the bullet which had been left in place and a lengthy hospitalisation was necessary. Though some progress was made during this time, Donald was never to fully recover and the injury troubled him for the rest of his life. Donald was unable to return to joinery but, after further training, began employment in social security; and in 1960 he married Margaret Maclean from Borve. Their marriage lasted 42 years during which time they had two daughters, Catherine and Christina.

Donald's conversion cannot be traced to any one given moment but in 1970 he professed his faith in the Lord for the first time in Stornoway Free Church and in 1993 he was ordained to the eldership.

Donald's genuine and unpretentious character accurately reflected his profession of faith. He was a quiet, thoughtful Christian who loved the Lord even though his providence towards him was often difficult. For Donald, these sad and painful experiences, not the least of which was the passing of his wife in 2002, were "an la a dh'orduich Dia.", and he was often heard to comment "Feumaidh sinn an copan againn ol" as he would reflect upon the necessity to accept the Lord's providence in all circumstances.

His personal experience of pain and immobility made him acutely aware of the needs of others, especially those who suffered restriction, and he was a diligent and sympathetic visitor. He loved the company of his fellow Christians and, while able, was a frequent visitor at communions throughout the Island of Lewis, contributing regularly to the Ceist. Latterly though, after he became more immobile, it was he who was visited by others for whom his company and fellowship was both a delight and uplifting experience.

Dan loved singing and was always ready to stand in as a precentor when needed. He also wrote Gaelic hymns which gave expression to the gospel he loved and his own expectation of the rest that awaited the people of God.

The Saviour he praised on this earth is the saviour whose face Dan now sees and the rest he anticipated is the rest we believe he now experiences: "...*cha bhi bas ann ni's mo, no bron, no eigheach, agus cha bhi pian ann ni's mo; oir chaidh na ceud nithean thairis.*"

To Donald's two daughters, son in law and grandchildren, along with his one surviving brother and wider family, we extend our deepest and prayerful sympathy.

Iver Martin

AFRICA BIBLE COLLEGE UGANDA

Rev Dr Iain D Campbell tells of the work of the Bible College in Kampala and the involvement of Kenny John Mackenzie, a member in the Back congregation.

Since Old Testament scholar Dr O. Palmer Robertson spoke on the Isle of Lewis in 2002 about his new role as Principal of a new Bible College in Kampala, Uganda, Kenneth John Mackenzie, an elder in Back Free Church, has been sharing the vision and has been actively involved in the construction of the new campus.

Africa Bible Colleges began in Liberia in 1975, as a result of the missionary vision and work of Dr John Chinchin, an American with a desire to train pastors for Africa. Following the success of the Liberian College, a second campus opened in Malawi in 1991. Political unrest forced the closure of ABC Liberia, although there are plans to resurrect that work.

Palmer Robertson, whose work on Old Testament theology has been greatly appreciated throughout the Reformed world, taught theology at the Malawi campus, until plans were developed for the new work in Uganda. Having been teaching for half the year at Knox Theological Seminary in Florida, and the other half in Malawi, the Robertson family relocated to Uganda, in order to devote themselves full-time to the new work there.

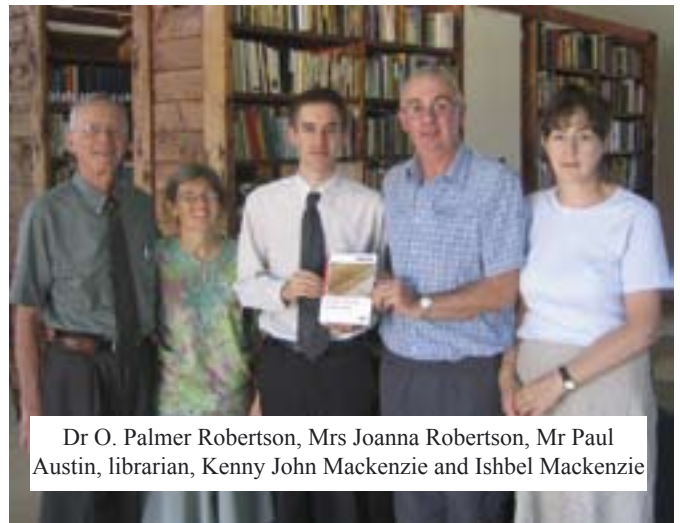
The move to Kampala was a strategic one; the land-locked East African country of Uganda offers a unique opportunity to offer Christian and theological education to the surrounding countries of Sudan Rwanda, Kenya and Ethiopia.

Kenny John began working with ABC Uganda in Summer 2003, and has been supported through his own resources and through his church in overseeing the construction work of the new campus. The plan is that eventually there will be a twenty-building Bible College campus; most of the buildings are sponsored by American churches, and already include faculty houses, a library, a dining area and a communications block.

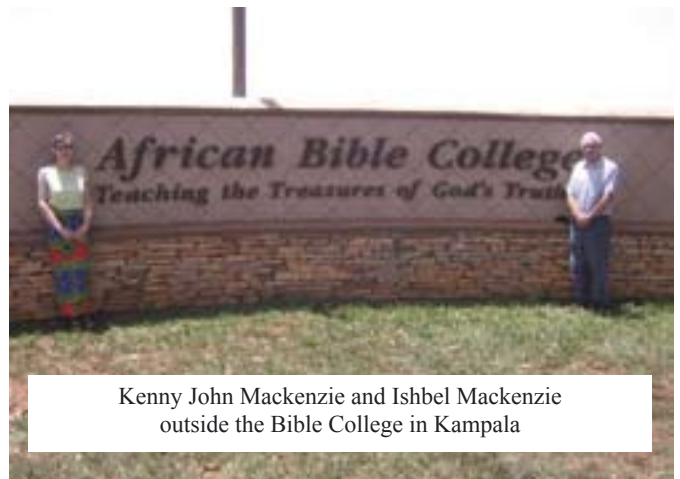
Presently the building work is at about two-thirds of the way to completion, and last year the College was able to admit its first class of students. Students will enrol in a four year course towards a Bachelor of Arts degree in biblical studies; it is also envisaged that eventually the core curriculum will include liberal arts.

Kenny's home congregation of Back was able to assist with the purchase of a landrover, and also with the provision of good quality books donated from various sources in Lewis. The librarian is Paul Austin, a member with the Durham congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales.

Currently Kenny John has been able to return home several times, and to update the church on the progress of the buildings and of his own work. Whatever the future holds, we are confident that this College will be a means for spreading the Gospel all over the world. Already the communications block with its massive radio tower is able to broadcast Gospel sermons to a culture spiritually hungry, yet open to many different religious influences.



Dr O. Palmer Robertson, Mrs Joanna Robertson, Mr Paul Austin, librarian, Kenny John Mackenzie and Ishbel Mackenzie



Kenny John Mackenzie and Ishbel Mackenzie outside the Bible College in Kampala

Let's continue to pray together that our Free Church link with Africa Bible College Uganda will enable the Reformed Faith to have wide circulation and the teaching of the Bible wide publicity. Let's also pray for Kenny John and his wife Ishbel, who has been able to visit Uganda on several occasions, as they share the vision for the College and make their contribution to it.

More information is available on www.abcuganda.org

Vision for Mission

**Smithton-Culloden Free Church
Missions Weekend
Saturday 23rd September
10.30am -1.00pm**

Speakers include:

Mr Barry Douglas, Scottish Director, AIM
Rev Douglas Campbell, South Africa
Talks, Missions Displays, Book Stalls, Videos,
Refreshments, Children's Programme

ALL WELCOME

2006 Day Away for Women

Organised by WFM

Saturday 21st October

MacDonald Aviemore Conference Centre
(very convenient for public transport)

‘Grounded in Love’

10am – 5pm

Speakers: Liz Ferguson, Maretta Campbell,
Marjory Mackay and Marie Christine Lux

Teaching, Praise, Drama, chat, crafts and bookstall

Cost: £25 includes lunch and tea/coffee
£20 for students

Buses available from Edinburgh, Glasgow and the North

Send booking form with payment as soon as possible to:

Margaret Smith, “Marvig”,

Northburn Avenue, Aberdeen AB15 6AH

Cheques payable to **Margaret Smith** and **not** to **W.F.M.**

(£5 will be retained if the booking is cancelled)

Crafts

If you have crafts which you would be prepared to sell for WFM, please contact:

Angela Thomas. 31 Aillort Place, East Mains, East Kilbride G74 4LL. Telephone: 01355 242491

E-mail: angelathomas31@hotmail.co.uk

About the Speakers

Liz Ferguson works part-time as a midwife in Edinburgh. She is also involved in the Crisis Pregnancy Centre and also Friends International, a Christian organisation working with international students. She is married to Calum.

Marie Christine Lux works in a hospice in Glasgow as a nurse in palliative care. She has spent much of her working life overseas as a missionary in India, Africa and South and Central America. She is also involved in charity fund-raising.

Marjory MacKay works as Matron in the Strathcarron Hospice and is very experienced in palliative care. She is married to John.

Maretta Campbell has until recently been Presbytery worker for Edinburgh and Perth where her work involved the planning and implementation of evangelistic activities in churches, the workplace and amongst women. She has recently married Rev Iain T Campbell.

Special Accommodation Offer

B&B for Friday night 20th October at The Aviemore Inn (Adjacent to Conference Centre)

**Cost: £30/person for 2 people sharing a twin room
£45/person for single occupancy**

**To book: Telephone the hotel on 01479 815180
mentioning you are attending the
2006 Day Away for Women**

Booking Form

Please reserve _____ place(s) at the
Day Away for Women.

Cheque for £_____ enclosed.

CONTACT

FIRST NAME:

SURNAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE: _____

ADDITIONAL NAME(S):

(Please give first name and surname)

(continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Please reserve _____ places on the bus from

*Further details will be sent with confirmation of
booking.*

Women for Mission

*We are pleased to have the following report from **Olwen Ford** on one of our WFM Projects.*

Update on BINCO

Marquees, water balloons, cake and lots of bright yellow T-shirts—a very different Friday afternoon in the seminary in Medellín. It was the 2nd June and we were celebrating the first anniversary of BINCO—the children’s community library which the WFM had funded in 2004/05.

A few days earlier I had interviewed the leader of the project Cielo Rocio.

Cielo, congratulations on Binco’s first anniversary. What has your overall impression been of your first year?

The goodness and blessing of God. In the first weeks I realised that I could either spend my time in the library looking after the children or go out and promote this new idea and opportunity in the local schools and community. I decided to go for the second option and God has blessed so much. We’ve had visits from the city mayor, the culture minister, city librarians and we’re now used as a model for community libraries.

Who then looks after the children?

Gisela, an older lady who loves being around children, comes every afternoon and she’s helped by a group of twelve students from the seminary and by senior pupils from the local secondary schools. They come to do their community service.

When is the library open?

We’re open every afternoon from 3 – 5 pm and on a Saturday morning from 9 – 12 am. During the week 3 – 4 pm is for children from three to seven years old and 4 – 5 pm is for the eight to twelve year olds. Mums are welcome to bring their babies and toddlers from 2 pm. In the mornings we often have visits from schools. Teachers bring their classes, usually sixty pupils, and use the facilities here.

What facilities do you have?

In the main area (painted as woodland with the pillars transformed into trees) we have our books, a television and DVD player and two computers. Unfortunately we don’t have the internet yet but we have encyclopaedias on disc. In this smaller area (an undersea world) we do crafts and there are tables where the children can do their homework and get help if they need it. Then there’s the office.

How have the children reacted to the library? It will have been a strange new thing for them.

At the beginning the children were a handful. When they



Cielo with some youngsters from BINCO

arrive they have to take off their shoes and they aren’t allowed to bring in drinks, food or chewing gum. They had to learn that this wasn’t the place to run and jump and then they had to learn to look after the books. Now they behave so well. It’s been wonderful to see the change. Boys who had to be put out by the seminary security men for kicking and punching now come and sit and read—like angels!

How have the parents reacted?

It’s been a privilege to get to know many of the mums. They notice the difference between their children’s behaviour and the behaviour of the seminary children. How come they’re so affectionate and respectful? They come and tell us their problems and we have many opportunities to talk about Jesus and to pray with them. We’re often a shoulder to cry on.

What have been your biggest problems over the past year?

Some seminary families are reluctant to let their children come and have them in contact with others from the neighbourhood. It’s understandable. The children can be violent—we have one boy who has tried to kill his mother and we’re in the process of getting psychological help for him. But it’s hurtful when friends don’t support us in what we’re doing and allow their children to come and enjoy the books and activities.

Our other problem is that we need more books. We have less than a thousand books. We have a monthly budget of £25—thankfully the seminary pay for our electricity and photocopying but we always need materials. The £25 disappears quickly so we haven’t been able to save a little month by month. And books are so expensive!

What about your plans for the next few years?

We have 105 children registered with library cards. Our target is to have one hundred and sixty enrolled by the end of 2006.

Eventually we're also going to need more space. Many classes have sixty plus pupils (seventy five is the maximum we've had in one class) and we don't really have room for that number of children.

I'm also keen to take books out to the local parks and street corners. We've done this twice and it's been successful. We take a box of books, a couple of hand puppets and tell stories and then let the children enjoy the books. Lots of children come but also teenagers and drug users. We need a special team and in sufficient numbers so that there's no risk to the children or to the team.

Dreams?

That's easy—to change the children's lives. To help them study, to encourage them to aim for university, to have dreams of their own and to change this whole community.

(The most memorable thing about talking to Cielo was her insistence that before we begin she should pray and thank God for the women in Scotland and for all that they have done here. Thank you.)

News from the Groups

Tain

A faithful group of ladies has been meeting over many years. The meetings take place on the 1st Tuesday of the months October to March in the church hall at 3 pm.

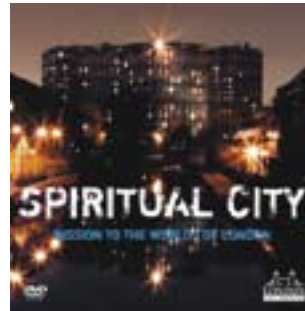
Attendance fluctuates a little though we have had over twenty at times. The format is an opening psalm singing, short Bible reading and prayer: then our guest speaker talks on their chosen topic. This is followed by questions or informal chats over a welcome cup of tea. A small sales table with scones, pancakes and other home bakes, jams, and other items helps raise funds which are distributed annually to the current WFM project and other missionary causes that touch our hearts.

At the February meeting we fix Xhosa texts to suitable cards which are sent to Dumisani for distribution there. This task is carried out to the strains of African psalm singing played in the background.

This session's meetings had speakers on FEBC(Manila), Fact Finding Trip to South African Mission Field, Snippets from Years of Overseas Service (Asia), Visit to a New Kenyan Orphanage, All in a Day's Work (on the home front). So we have had a broad perspective of Christ's ongoing work across the world.

Before leaving we try to write a short note on letters (two per meeting) to our missionaries labouring far from home. We enjoy reading their newsletters which help to challenge us and make our prayers more meaningful and show us a little of the sometimes difficult circumstances they labour in.

One of the speakers we hope to have next session is involved in prison visitation. If any ladies find they are able to join us on a winter Tuesday they will be made most welcome.



Red Buses and Rickshaws

New DVD highlights evangelism in the many worlds of London City Mission

Few people would expect to find the London City Mission in a motor-rickshaw! But that's where part of the action in the LCM's new DVD, *Spiritual City*, takes place. City Missionary Harish Patel and Chief Executive John Nicholls are seen visiting Harish's ancestral home in Gujarat. The trip to India is part of an investigation into some of the many different 'worlds' that are now found in London—and which LCM's 120 full-time workers are endeavouring to reach with the gospel.

Harish Patel works in Southall, with its large Asian population. Other missionaries are seen at work in London's Theatreland and among the staff maintaining the city's familiar red buses.

While many may be aware of LCM's work with the homeless, the Mission's patient and culturally-sensitive outreach to other groups may be unfamiliar. *Spiritual City* presents ministries that aim to be both faithful to the biblical gospel and painstakingly relevant to the different worlds of London—whether their traditional means of transport is a rickshaw or a red bus!

The DVD is available free on request from: London City Mission, 175 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2AH
dvd@lcm.org.uk; www.lcm.org.uk; 020 7407 7585

New Co-ordinator for Latin Link in Scotland

Latin Link is very pleased to appoint Martin Haworth as their new Coordinator for Scotland. Martin is available to help churches develop their mission vision, and set up links between churches here and people and projects in Latin America. As well as placing skilled and trained people, Latin Link also specialises in sending short-term 'Step' Teams to work with churches in Latin America each Spring and Summer. Such experiences have often proved pivotal in the spiritual formation of young people who can then touch the home church with enthusiasm for outreach and passion for Christ.

There are all sorts of ways to develop a passion for Latin mission and Martin would be very glad to tell you more.

You can get in touch with him at:

Latin Link Scotland, Gartgreenie House,
Forestmill, Alloa, FK10 3QG
Tel: 01259 752728; E-mail: scotland@latinlink.org.uk
Web: www.latinlink.org



An t-Slabhraidh òr



Tha criomag no dhà de na chuala sinn ann an Siabost bho Phrionnsapal Macleòid madainn na Sàbaid a chaidh an seo, agus tha sinn a' toirt taing dha airson cead a thoirt dhuinn co-roinn a dhèanamh de na chuala sinn.

Chuala sinn gu robh sinn beò ann an saoghal gun dòchas, ach far an robh creideamh gu robh dòchas. Is e an dòchas as farsaing' a th' aig sluagh Dhè gu bheil gach nì a' co-obrachadh chum maith. Ged a bhios eagal air a' Chrìosdaidh ro Rùn Dhè, cuimhnichidh iad gur e rùn athar a tha seo.

Chaidh a thoirt gur n-aire cuideachd gu robh Rùn pearsanta ann a bharrachd air Rùn farsaing, agus bha seo misneachail. Mus deach ar breith, bha ro-aithne aig a' Chruithear oirnn'—mus robh grian neo gealach ann—mar a thuirt am bàrd,

“mus do dhealbh Thu an cruthachadh
mus robh aingeal ann an Glòir.”

Chaidh a radh rinn, 'Cha robh E ann gun an t-eòlas-sa a bhith Aige ort. Nach prìseil an smuain sin, agus nach i a bheir misneach eadhon ann an dorchadas.

Is e rùn Dhè ar dèanamh co-chosmhuil ri ìomhaigh A Mhic. Chan e ar cofhurtachd neo ar dòighealachd neo ar maoin a th' Aige mar an nì as àirde, ach ar dèanamh co-chosmhuil ri ìomhaigh A Mhic. Cuiridh E stoirmean agus freasdail a tha caomh thugad gus an Rùn-sa a thoirt gu buil.

A' beachdachadh air Pòl, dh'fhòghlaim E ann am prìosan, le sgiùrsadh, le farmad, le fuath ach cuideachd le misneach Epaphrodituis. Chaidh gach àm a chleachdadh. Chaidh a' cheist fhaighneach, 'Dè a dh'ionnsaich sinne?' agus tha mise ga fàgail agam fhìn an toiseach agus agaibh-se a leughadairean.

Chaidh prìsealachd coibhneas Dhè a thoirt gu soilleir far comhair. Cha tug E an talamh neo a' ghrian seachad, mòr agus coibhneil mar a bhiodh sin. Thug E A Mhac seachad.

Nach ann an seo a tha Gràdh, agus mar sin dh'fhaodamaid greimeachadh ris an fhìrinn gu robh far an robh sinn aig a' cheart àm gar dlùthachadh ri ìomhaigh A Mhic. Ma tha Dia linn, cò dh'fhaodas a bhith nar n-aghaidh? Mar sin b'i a' chomhairle a fhuair sinn,

'Fuirich gu foighidneach ri Dia
glac thugad misneach mhòr.'

Nach bu mhath gu leanadh an teagasg rinn uile. Bhiodh sinn rèidh nar spioradan air slighe chorrach.

Fhuair mi na rainn a leanas bhon Bhean Phòsta Lili Chaimbeul agus tha na rainn tha mi a' tuigsinn air an eadar-theangachadh leis An t-Urramach I Maciomhair nach maireann a bha na mhinistear tlachdmhor ann an Càrlabagh. Chuala mi gu lèòr mu dheidhinn bhon bhana bhàrd Màiri Anna Niciomhair nach maireann bhon Bhac.

Tha an gràdh tha mise luaidh toirt buaidh
'Sa' chridhe chruaidh le èifeachd
Air dhomh bhith slàn nì e mi tinn
'S air dhomh bhith tinn nì m'leigheas.

Tha mi gu tinn 's mi fann gun treòir
Gus an toir gràdh don ghràdh-sa faochadh
Is e tuilleadh gràidh a cheanglas suas,
An lot rinn buaidh A ghaoil-san.

Is e tuilleadh den t-sonas nì mi fann,
Bheireadh san àm dhomh saorsa
Is ma mharbhas tuilleadh mi gu dearbh
B'e an t-eucail-mharbhaidh chaomh i.

(Nach caomh na briathran a tha seo agus tha mi a' toirt taing dhuibh uile a tha a' cur stuth thugam a chleachdas mi. Tha seo a' dèanamh feum mhòr. Cumaibh a'rannsachadh!)

SEANFHACAIL

IS BEAG AN RUD NACH
GABH ROINN.

MUR ITH THU BIADH CHA
DÈAN THU GNÌOMH.

Free Church Bookshop

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

The Jesus Gospel. Recovering the lost message. Liam Goligher. Authentic. £7.99. In this book the author goes right through the Scriptures, restating the timeless truths and core values of historic evangelicalism.

He Gave us a Valley, also Give me this Mountain. Both books by Dr. Helen Roseveare. CFP. £6.99. Helen went to the Congo in 1953. She has pioneered vital medical work but after being attacked returned to Britain. Then in 1966 she set out again for the Congo to assist in the rebuilding of the nation.

They Were Pilgrims. David Brainard, Henry Martyn, Robert Murray M'Cheyne. Ion Keith-Falconer. Marcus Loane. Banner of Truth. £15.00. The young men in this book are examples of what Christian passion means. It also challenges us to live with greater devotion to Christ.

The Art of Prayer. Conversation with God. Timothy Jones. S.U. £7.99. In this book the author honestly shares his own struggles with prayer and invites us to be honest as well. He offers his own struggles with prayer and invites us to be honest as well. He offers Biblically wise, warmly instructive explorations of our questions.

The Discipline of Grace. God's role and our role in the pursuit of holiness. Jerry Bridges. NavPress. £9.99. In this book the author offers a clear and thorough explanation of the Gospel and what it means to the believer.

The Light of the Psalms. Deepening your faith with every Psalm. Michael Ross. CFP. £8.99. This book thematically groups inspiration from all 150 Psalms, focusing them on the three persons of the Trinity. Each week follows a theme of prayer and uses a set of psalms that apply to that theme.

Living in the Hope of Future Glory. The Glorification of the Christian. Tom Barnes. EP. £9.95. In this book the author explores the much neglected topic of glorification, that is, of man's final restoration to a state of perfection.

By Faith Not by Sight. Paul and the Order of Salvation. Richard Gaffin. Paternoster. £8.99. The issues in this book are central to our understanding of the Gospel and its implication for Christian living.

Doubt in Perspective. God is bigger than you think. Alister McGrath. IVP. £6.99. The book addresses specific doubts that Christians experience, particularly within our postmodern culture.

Evangelism which way now? An evaluation of Alpha, Emmaus, Cell church, Christianity Explored and other contemporary strategies for evangelism. Church House. £11.99. Mike Booker and Mark Ireland have drawn on research and practical ministry and mission experience to produce this up-to-date guide to today's evangelistic strategies

Sitting at the Feet of Jesus. Finding rest in a restless world. Johannes Facius. New Wine. £5.99. This book focuses on some foundational teaching to help us discover the essentials in learning to sit at Jesus' feet.

BOOKSHOP MANAGER: Charles Douglas

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

Wide range of Reformed and Evangelical literature
Special discounts for ministers and students
Arrangements for book agents, bookstalls and conferences
Book tokens issued and accepted

Orders may be placed by e-mail to
bookshop@freechurchofscotland.org.uk

PRAYER DIARY

"I will bless them...I will send down showers... there will be showers of blessing" Ezekiel 34:26

- FRI. 1 Pray today that the Lord will both bless your local Free Church with his refreshing showers and will make it and each member a blessing in your area.
- SAT. 2 A team of 14 young people from the Scottish Bible Society is in Malawi from 29 Aug. till 7 September, helping the Bible Society of Malawi distribute food aid and Scriptures in markets, schools, hospitals and clinics. Please pray for them today.
- SUN. 3 We have prayed much for Leith. Rejoice with the congregation today as they worship together with their new minister, Rev Colin Macleod and his wife Jessie and their family.
- MON. 4 The new session of the Free Church College opens tonight with a service of worship and prayer. Join in praying for each student with all their needs, both physical and spiritual, and each of their teachers.
- TUES. 5 Ayr Bible Convention 2006 began yesterday and will continue till Friday. Speakers are Rev Alasdair I Macleod, Rev Dr David Smith, and Rev Mark Johnston. Pray for God's presence.
- WED. 6 Please pray for the families of the two boys from San Andres who were so sadly killed in a car accident after camp. Pray too for the other campers and leaders as they come to terms with this traumatic happening, and ask the Lord to somehow make even this work together for good. Let's also thank the Lord that the camps went well.
- THUR. 7 The Instructor is 100 years old this month. Thank the Lord for all the good it has done for generations of our young folk, and pray for Mrs Irene Howat, its Editor, as she carries on the excellent work for another term of five years.
- FRI. 8 Bon Accord congregation, Aberdeen, are now seeking a Youth Worker as well as a minister. Please pray earnestly that these needs will be supplied and that the Lord will keep them from discouragement.
- SAT. 9 This is an evangelistic weekend in Maryburgh with Rev Kenneth Stewart, Downvale, as the guest preacher. Pray that the Lord will open hearts and minds to the Gospel.
- SUN. 10 Lennoxton congregation is to have their communion service today. Pray for the people and their minister, Rev Iain Beaton and his wife Margaret, and ask the Lord to open the windows of heaven and give them a big blessing and add to their numbers.
- MON. 11 Wick and Keiss W.F.M. expect a visit from Elizabeth Mackenzie at their meeting tomorrow night. Please pray she will be well enough to come and that the Lord will bless each of the ladies and renew their prayers for the work overseas.
- TUES. 12 The International Missions Board meets in Edinburgh today. Ask the Lord to make clear His will in all the decisions they must make.
- WED. 13 Remember the vacant congregation of Urray and Strathconon. Pray that they might be led to the right man who will pastor them and that even this time of waiting for the Lord might be used to give them strength and growth in grace.
- THUR. 14 As the new school session gets underway pray for all Christian teachers and Head Teachers and teachers of Religious and Moral education in schools throughout the country
- FRI. 15 Perth Free Church are holding a Supper Evening tonight, with May Nicholson as the guest speaker. 'Please pray that the meeting will be used of God to challenge and encourage believers in their faith and to bring any

Hard Questions for Brora

We the undersigned of Creich, Kincardine and Croick Free Church feel that we must respond to a paragraph in the Monthly Record dated July/August 2006.

The paragraph that causes us great concern is on page 11 under the heading "Discussion" where Rev. Colin Dow "wondered why there had been such a decline in Brora in an area where ministry had been successful in the past. He felt that hard questions had to be addressed".

We have been loosely linked with the Brora congregation, and feel that whoever the hard questions are directed at they certainly should not be directed at the Rev Ken Hunter. We strongly believe that this has been a misdirected question and should never have been asked at the Assembly, or printed in the Monthly Record.

As a congregation we have had the Rev. Ken Hunter as our interim moderator over a five year period and resent the implication of this paragraph.

During his time as our interim moderator we have found Rev Ken Hunter to be a loyal, faithful and instructive minister to us, firmly believing that he carries out his ministerial duties diligently and conscientiously. We are more than happy with the service and provision he is giving us. Ken is a good role model and is found very approachable by his congregation and by people outwith his congregation. He gives time and guidance to all whom he encounters in his daily life and most importantly demonstrates prayerful concern for them. He is honest and sincere and is a good example of how a Free Church Minister should perform his role.

Whoever needs to answer the question should certainly not be the Rev. Ken Hunter.

It is with sadness that we are shortly to lose Ken as our interim moderator and trust that the Free Church will acknowledge the good work that he has carried out in our congregation and that the question raised by Rev. Colin Dow should have no further action taken on it.

Andrew Calder

Bonar Bridge

Sutherland

(and signed by 15 others of the Creich Free Church, names and addresses supplied)

Legacies

The General Trustees acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacy:

Helen Alice Sinclair—£537 for Adam (Central Asia)

unbelievers who may be there to know the reality of His love and mercy for themselves'.

- SAT. 16 Pray for a Day Conference for Sunday School Teachers to be held today in Greyfriars Free Church, Inverness. The speaker will be Rev Hector Morrison, and three seminars are planned giving practical help to teachers.
- SUN. 17 Let's thank the Lord for a new ministry begun in Gravir, praying for Rev Iain T. Campbell and his wife Maretta as they worship with their own people there today.
- MON. 18 Greenock congregation give thanks to the Lord and to all who remembered their 'Psalms for a summer evening'. They were encouraged by the attendance, especially that more local people attended than ever before.
- TUES. 19 Govanhill congregation are asking the Lord to send them more workers. There are so many needs and so many opportunities but resources are already stretched. Let's pray with them.
- WED. 20 Remember Rev Colin Macleod, Army Chaplain in Canterbury, giving thanks that his wife and young family (Lauren, Michael and Jennifer) have settled well there. Ask the Lord to give him His own strength and wisdom for his ministry to the Scottish soldiers, some of whom have recently been deployed in Afghanistan. Pray for their safety and for their families.
- THUR. 21 Pray for the Lord's help for those working on the revised Sunday School Syllabus which, hopefully, will be ready for use in August 2007. Ask that they may be able to make the lessons both interesting and spiritually searching.
- If you have any request for prayer or praise for the November Prayer Diary please send now to Elizabeth Graham: tel 0131 336 4071 or e-mail; w.d.graham@btinternet.com
- FRI. 22 Maryburgh children's Friday Club will be held tonight. Pray for them and for the possibility of a Club in Tore.
- SAT. 23 Tomorrow Cobham congregation are planning to start a new monthly Sunday evening service in Maidenhead (30 miles away) where some families live. Pray that this will prove to be a good idea and that some interested friends may join them.
- SUN. 24 Carlway congregation meet around the Lord's Table today. Please pray that they will be drawn together as a family of the Lord and know for sure that He is there among them.
- MON. 25 Please remember the churches in Eastern Prince Edward Island, Canada which have been vacant for the past 3 years. Pray that the Lord would direct a suitable pastor to shepherd the flock there.
- TUES. 26 Thank the Lord with Rev Daniel Sladek and Duirinish congregation after recent encouragements and the induction there. Please pray that the Lord would give wisdom to the new minister, and that they as a congregation would grow in grace, and that the Lord would add to His church.
- WED. 27 Oban congregation have been having a discussion group on alternate Wednesday evenings. Pray that this will be a good way of sharing questions and getting to know one another better.
- THUR. 28 Pray for all the arrangements being made for the Ladies Day Away next month (21st). May it be a day which the Lord will bless.
- FRI. 29 In some schools in which there are Christian teachers the Scripture Union is struggling. Pray for them as they try to get the groups to function well and that they may have wisdom for each situation.
- SAT. 30 The Church finances have slipped back into deficit, as an expected increase in givings did not materialise. Pray that the Lord will open our hearts and our pockets tomorrow.

CONGREGATIONAL REMITTANCES

Amounts received by Central Office towards Congregational Target Figures.
The first figure is the total for 2006 and the second is the total for July.

NORTHERN

	Total 2006	July
Assynt	3,019	0
Eddrachillis	934	0
Clyne	8,142	1,500
Creich	6,455	1,000
Dornoch	15,746	3,512
Fearn	8,461	1,900
Golspie	10,329	1,000
Helmsdale	8,800	1,200
Lairg	2,753	0
Lybster	2,886	100
Olrig, Watten & Bower	7,353	0
Rogart	2,676	1,000
Rosskeen	35,096	3,000
Tain	16,225	3,000
Tarbat	0	0
Thurso & Reay	11,950	1,551
Tongue	259	0
Farr	800	800
Strathy & Halladale	1,162	250
Wick & Keiss	9,019	1,500
Total	152,065	21,313

GLASGOW & ARGYLL

	Total 2006	July
Arran	2,476	300
Ayr	16,037	2,036
Bishopbriggs	9,465	1,032
Campbeltown, Tarbert & Islay	9,276	1,400
Coatbridge	10,836	1,500
Cumbernauld	10,936	1,500
Dumbarton	5,693	0
Dumfries	8,300	800
Dunblane	9,370	0
East Kilbride	8,160	1,000
Glasgow		
- Dowanvale	51,431	7,200
- Govanhill	9,130	0
- Partick	14,398	2,150
- St Vincent St	23,780	2,975
- Shettleston	0	0
Greenock	625	33
Dunoon	388	0
Strachur	0	0
Kilwinning & Saltcoats	5,561	40
Lennoxtown	12,966	0
Lochgilthead & Lochfyneside	7,644	700
Mull	3,925	500
Coll	172	20
Oban	12,245	3,000
Paisley	6,659	0
Total	239,475	26,186

INVERNESS, LOCHABER & ROSS

	Total 2006	July
Acharacle & Strontian	1,248	0
Ardnamurchan	3,480	25
Burghead	12,122	1,533
Dingwall & Strathpeffer	21,303	2,200
Elgin & Forres	6,669	2,290
Fortrose	16,070	1,700
Fort William	7,206	800
Glenurquhart & Fort Augustus	6,694	0
Inverness		
- Free North	68,841	7,230
- Greyfriars-Stratherrick	36,547	0
Kilmallie	13,206	1,500
Kilmorack & Strathglass	0	0
Kiltarlity & Kirkhill	0	0
Kiltearn	0	0
Badenoch	5,630	750
Knockbain	12,000	1,500
Maryburgh	10,300	950
Killearnan	8,340	1,058
Naim, Croy & Ardersier	210	30
Resolis	5,850	1,100
Urquhart	11,000	2,679
Smithton-Culloden	42,367	3,458
Urray & Strathconon	21,078	3,000
Total	310,163	31,804

WESTERN ISLES

	Total 2006	July
Back	62,201	9,140
Barvas	22,955	2,805
Callanish	26,903	2,500
Carloway	17,500	2,500
Cross	34,331	4,836
Harris	7,733	1,000
Kinloch	28,121	3,120
Knock	33,080	4,300
Lochs	28,651	3,100
North Tolsta	16,370	6,500
North Uist, Grimsay & Berneray	9,366	1,000
Park	13,703	0
Point	19,016	3,307
Scalpay	11,619	1,658
Shawbost	20,500	2,250
South Uist & Benbecula	7,302	1,000
Stornoway	154,608	22,077
Total	513,960	71,093

EDINBURGH & PERTH

	Total 2006	July
Aberdeen	60,790	613
Dundee	20,207	2,580
Edinburgh		
- Buccleuch	36,430	4,000
- St Columba	17,669	1,550
Falkirk	14,549	4,400
Kirkcaldy	12,367	1,225
Leith	18,084	296
Livingston	13,775	1,800
London City	21,459	2,148
London - Cobham	4,465	500
Perth & Pitlochry	12,408	1,600
St. Andrews	3,691	160
Total	235,893	20,872

SKYE & WESTER ROSS

	Total 2006	July
Bracadale	6,688	40
Coigach	4,053	0
Duirinish	9,475	50
Gairloch & Kinlochewe	9,449	2,052
Kilmuir & Stenscholl	11,502	2,175
Lochalsh, Glenshiel & Glenelg	5,305	600
Lochbroom	14,295	1,840
Lochcarron	10,533	1,200
Plockton & Kyle	12,402	0
Poolewe & Aultbea	21,839	2,500
Portree	12,917	1,500
Raasay	1,269	170
Sleat & Strath	9,750	1,400
Snizort	3,867	1,000
Total	133,343	14,527

Private Donations etc.

Livonia	91	0
Charlottetown	827	0
Evangel. Presb. Church	15,711	0
Private Donations	31,665	5,744
Total	48,293	5,744

GRAND TOTALS

	Total	July
2006	1,633,192	191,539
2005	1,555,274	177,563
% increase		5.01%

Engaging with Society

The results of
May 2006

Bill Baird
CARE for
Scotland

The month of May 2006 proved to be a significant one for the Church in the UK and its impact on our society. And the outcomes were mixed.

On 12th May there was a party-like atmosphere around the Houses of Parliament in London. Christians of all denominations, together with others of no faith, united to demonstrate their opposition to the proposed euthanasia legislation which was being debated in the House of Lords at that time.

Inside the Lords there was a passionate debate lasting the whole day, with 90 peers wishing to speak and as a result individual speeches were strictly time-limited.

The outcome of the vote in the Lords was a reward for all the work of the Care not Killing alliance which had effectively mobilized the Christian community, charities, and a variety of other organisations to oppose the proposals. The plan to allow physician-assisted suicide was defeated by a margin of 3 to 2.

On 23rd May at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland equally controversial topics were being discussed. Kirk committees were proposing that ministers should be allowed, without censure, to bless same-sex civil partnerships and that it is morally acceptable to allow stem cell experimentation on human embryos.

On the civil partnership issue, armies of different viewpoints had been marshalling their troops ahead of the debate. Forward Together, the evangelical grouping within the Church, did a good work in presenting a firm, yet compassionate, case against allowing Kirk Ministers to bless same-sex relationships. Those in favour argued that the church needed to respond to the new legislative framework in which it finds itself. The deliverance to the Assembly was accepted with the proviso that it go out to presbyteries in the next year for discussion and ratification. We can expect 12 months of ongoing debate regarding this issue before a definitive position is reached.

Media attention over the civil partnerships proposals had eclipsed the profound issue of human embryo experimentation and yet some would argue that this was the more fundamental of the two debates, with its implications on how Christians value human life and honour the status of a human embryo. The Assembly voted in favour of allowing experimentation, despite having decided the complete opposite some years previously.

It is believed that the Church of Scotland may be the only mainstream denomination to be positively in favour of embryo experimentation.

The contrast between the outcomes of the 12th and 23rd of May is striking. On the one hand a united consensus of Christians successfully opposing legislation which would devalue human life. On the other one denomination taking a stance on controversial issues in a way that is unlikely to find acceptance from significant portions of the universal Church, and which, on the human embryo issue, does devalue human life.

What are the lessons?

There are two ways in which the church can engage with secular society. One way is to seek to transform society to be in conformity with Scripture and historic Christian principles, values and teaching.

The second is to conform to the values and rules of secular society based upon a reinterpretation of Scripture in the light of 21st century societal norms.

The lesson from May 2006 would appear to be that where the church is united around a common position derived from Biblical principles God is willing and able to bless, and we remain an effective purifying presence in society. In contrast, where some in the church seek to conform to secular society based upon disagreement over interpretation of Scripture, the church will continue to be divided and largely irrelevant to many Scots.

The Christian Church owes it to the Lord, and to our fellow citizens, to pursue a determination to be a united and prophetic voice in our society.

Contact details:

CARE for Scotland, Challenge House, 29 Canal Street,
Glasgow G4 0AD, Tel 0141-332 7212
bill.baird@care.org.uk
www.care.org.uk

Free Church College

Bachelor of Theology

*A degree programme for ministers, missionaries
and other Christian professionals*

- ◆ Three or four year course
- ◆ Confessionally based
- ◆ Greek and Hebrew
- ◆ Outstanding library facilities
- ◆ Experienced staff

For more information write for a free Prospectus to:
The Secretary, Free Church College,
The Mound, Edinburgh EH1 2LS
Email: amacleod@freescotcoll.ac.uk
or visit our website at: www.freescotcoll.ac.uk

*The Free Church College is a Partner Institution
of the University of Glasgow*