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John and Neina Lister - see page 18

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Leadership?



WE HAVE ALL been subjected in recent days, to the voices of our political leaders. Each Party have had their best men come forward and say the best things they could say, to convince us that their Party was the best Party to lead our nation over the next few years.

For the first time the three main Parties had their leaders come together in debate before an audience to answer their questions. The main purpose of this debate was to help us decide which of them was the best leader. Each leader did his best not to offend but to please the audience. A poll was conducted to see how well the leaders did and to find out who was the most popular.

After discovering how people voted in the first poll, the leaders 'made adjustments' to their policies to see if they could 'win' more voters at the next two debates.

After the election, when it became clear that a 'hung' parliament was inevitable, the 'wheeling and dealing' began! All the main three Parties compromised and did all they could to try and retain, or obtain, the power to govern.

So changes were made in Party

policies, on two counts. First, in order to win voters at the debates, and then to gain power. It has been materialised in the 'power to the people' plan of the coalition government's read at the Queen's Speech. This changing of principles reveals the great difference between the Political Parties and the Church.

The policies of the State are not sacrosanct - they can be changed in order to get power! The Party hierarchy will give the 'ok' if it means getting power! However, in the Church their is (or ought to be), the unchangeable principles of God's Word behind its vision, purpose and organisation.

It was sad to hear one leader on his election tours, ask the public, 'What do you want? We will let you, the people, choose where you want us to spend your taxes'. Where has leadership gone? Leaders are to lead the people. It reminded me of Jim Hacker in the TV comedy sitcom 'Yes, Minister', saying to his secretary when talking about his constituents, 'I am their leader, I have to follow them'!!

Our nation needs good leaders. Good leadership takes the **initiative**

and encourages those under them to believe in his principles and to work hard for success.

Good leadership involves **making** and **taking** important decisions which are necessary - not giving people what they want. Good leadership **knows** what is best for the people but still acts despite incurring the anger of many loyal supporters. Good leadership does not mean seeking power, control or popularity, but doing what is right and best - all things considered.

A good leader does not compromise his absolutes. In order to be a leader one must have absolutes about which he is convinced. In all organisations there will be administrative matters about which there must be compromises. Compromising on minor and small matters is necessary to adjust to changing circumstances, but there must not be changes in the great foundational principles.

Good leadership involves the exercise of **authority**. Many people today think exercising authority is bullying or seeking control. It is not. It is practicing **responsibility** and **accountability**. Both authority and responsibility today are not understood, taught or practiced as they ought to be. Respect and submission to authority is essential in any successful organisation. You cannot be allowed to exercise authority without also being accountable.

Good leadership involves **preparing** people for reality. Good leadership makes no pretense about the difficulties and problems of life and educates and instructs its followers to be ready for the inevitable.

Jesus taught His disciples the disciplines of living the Christian life. He did not pretend the Christian life was easy. He told His followers that *"If they persecuted Me they will persecute you"* [John 15:20], *"In the world you will have tribulation"* [John 16:33]. Mark tells us that Jesus said we will receive many things *"with persecutions"*, but He adds *"in the age to come eternal life"* [Mar 10:30]. Yes, we may have difficulties but a wonderful life lies ahead of every believer.

We live at a time when the Church as well as our government, need strong leadership. A good leader knows what he believes in and is not distracted, by power or money, in striving for that goal.

God's Word is the foundation for all the principles of Church and State. We need nothing more than faith in what God has said in Holy Scripture. We must pray that God will raise up leaders in both these institutions.

There are difficult times ahead but that should not deter us from having strong faith in the God of Holy Scripture. Let us pray that we will be faithful to Him and that we will serve Him as best we can. □

A Tribute

to the memory of

Helen Cameron Fraser

born 14 July 1920, died 9 March 2010

given at the Funeral Service held in Inverness on 16 March 2010

Compiled by her nephew, John Tallach

I WOULD LIKE first of all to thank Revd Calum MacInnes and the congregation here for caring for us on this sad family occasion. I would also like to say how much the family appreciate the care shown to Helen since she went to live in Ballifeary House in November 2005. It is in appreciation of the care which was given earlier to my mother and now to Helen, that the collection at this service is in support of the valued work done at Ballifeary. I feel it is appropriate also to mention Helen's niece Elizabeth, a frequent visitor to Ballifeary who has shown such commitment in contributing to Helen's care.

And thanks to you all for coming here today to mark Helen's passing. After the interment in Fodderty, you are invited to return with the family to the National Hotel in Dingwall. That will give us a chance to share further memories of Helen. Of course, although we honour her memory, we give glory first of all to God, and for that reason I would like to begin this tribute with

the words from 1 Peter: "*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*" [1 Peter 1:3].

Helen was born on the 14 of July, 1920, to Samuel Fraser and Elizabeth Cameron. She had an older sister, Elizabeth, and an older brother, James.

As she was growing up, Helen showed an aptitude for studying. She was fond of Maths. She got a good group of Highers on her fifth year in Dingwall Academy, and would love to have gone on to university. However, her parents had already borne the expense of putting her older brother James through university, and Helen was needed to help run the drapery business which her father had set up in Strathpeffer.

My older brothers have warm and vivid memories of life in the home of Helen's parents, our grandparents, in Strathpeffer, I

cannot claim to share in these, as I was two when Helen's parents sold Timaru and moved to Ashlynn in Dingwall. This left Helen free to begin to train as a nurse. However, in the course of her training, her father became ill with cancer. Helen therefore gave up her training so that she could be at home to nurse her father till his death in 1949.

After this Helen worked in Boots in Dingwall, then she trained as a civil servant. She stayed with the civil service for the rest of her working life. In the early sixties, her mother became bed ridden. As she had done for her father, Helen gave her mother devoted care until her death in 1962. Two or three years later, Helen was asked by her employers to take over as manager of the DHSS office in Thurso. This opened up a new chapter in her life. Helen made many new friends in the north to whom she became deeply attached.

Geraldine MacLennan, who has been a good friend of Helen's for many years, said to me last week that she believed Helen never grasped what a high regard others had for her. I think that one reason why people did regard her highly was, she put herself second and gave first place to others. She actually had quite a strong personality, with firm views which she could defend. But she also had a gift for helping and serving others. In fact she derived what I believe was a truly Christian

pleasure from this.

My very first memory of Helen, from the time before I had gone to school in Kames, is of a parcel which arrived containing a birthday present from her. I am sure that all of us in the family cherish similar memories today.

When we came from Stornoway to Dingwall in 1960 after the death of our father, Helen and her mother helped us to buy a small flat in Caberfeidh Avenue. Helen had a car, which was a big thing for us boys. She was not careless with her possessions. But at the same time she was willing for us ruffians to grind the gears of BVA 99, CJS336, or in BJS334B, as we learned to drive on her Standard 7, her Austin A30, or her Ford Cortina. (Just to give you a perspective on the period I am talking about, that last car was bought new, around 1964, for £702 10/-.) I remember Helen saying, "They didn't even take the ten shillings off!"

Our cousins, Elizabeth, Isobel and Cameron, came home from Africa without their father in 1959, and their mother also died in 1961. It is not surprising that they developed a particular appreciation of her, and a special relationship with her.

Helen's care towards my late brother Fraser was exceptional. She looked after him as a boy from 1951 to 53 when he attended Dingwall Academy before we moved to

Stornoway. She also kept house for him from time to time during his ministry in Broadford, Kinlochbervie or Thurso. This became particularly meaningful during those periods when Fraser's health was poor. Her unselfish commitment has left the whole family in her debt.

Central to who Helen was and what made her tick was her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Her commitment to others was an outworking of her prior commitment to him who loved her and gave himself for her. I do not have any details of how she came to faith in Christ. She did say, however,

looking back to her experience of rheumatic fever as a child, that it was worth being ill for how much she benefited from the visits, including the prayers, of Revd D A Macfarlane, who began his ministry in Dingwall in 1930, when Helen was ten. Because his ministry covered 34 years of her life, and because it came to mean so much to her, I would like to share some comments Mr Macfarlane made, when preaching on the meeting between Jesus and Zacchaeus, a cheating tax collector who came to love and to follow Christ: The quotation shows, among other things, Mr Macfarlane's exceptional gift for using one part of Scripture to throw light on another:



Helen Fraser

“Zacchaeus came to know that, though he would gain the whole world, it would not profit him if he lost his soul ... There is not much told us of the work of the Holy Spirit in melting Zacchaeus and convincing him of guilt, yet in the needed measure the Redeemer, by the Holy Spirit, brought this home to him.

There probably was an element of curiosity in Zacchaeus climbing the tree, but we believe there was far more than that ... It is likely that he heard of the parables which we have in Luke 15 – the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son, and that there is joy in the presence of the angels of

God over one sinner who repents. Perhaps he also heard about the prayer of the tax collector.

Here we have him in the sycamore tree. Probably no one saw him climb up, or was much interested in what the Redeemer would say to him. Perhaps he was so covered with leaves that there was very little of him to be seen, but he had

a gnawing crave, secretly begotten in him by the Holy Spirit, an ache in his soul to get something from Christ ... Then Jesus said, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down”; and the word of a king was there. We may well conclude that, there and then, the divine new birth took place in the soul of Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus came

down and received him joyfully. He had the holy liberty of the gospel, his heart was opened, there was a divine resurrection in his soul. He began to worship God in Christ, and to rejoice in Christ Jesus. He got the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ..

Christ went in to sup with Zacchaeus, and Zacchaeus with him. And the heart of Zacchaeus said, "Thou are the Son of God, Thou are the king of Israel". Thou knowest that, though I have been a tax collector, cheating men and women, yet I desire to worship thee. Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee."

That is at least a flavour of a gospel ministry which was profoundly meaningful to Helen. She spoke of how, at the end of one of his visits to her when she was ill with rheumatic fever, he came back again after he had left her room. He put his head in the door and quoted the words "*Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee*". In situations like that, you felt that there was nothing more that could be said, or that needed to be said.

I would like now, in coming towards the close of this tribute, to quote from the Pilgrim's Progress, where Bunyan gives Mr Stand Fast's testimony to the grace of God before crossing over the river.

"I see myself now at the end of my journey, my toilsome days are

ended. I am going now to see that head that was crowned with thorns, and that face that was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith, but I now go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with him in whose company I delight myself.

I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of, and wherever I have seen the print of his shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too ... His word I did use to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings ...

Now, while he was thus in discourse, his countenance changed, and after he had said, Take me, for I come to thee, he ceased to be seen of them. But glorious it was to see how the open region was filled with horses and chariots, with trumpeters and pipers, with singers and players on stringed instruments, to welcome the pilgrims as they went up, and followed one another in at the beautiful gate of the city." As Bunyan said, "I wished myself among them".

Today we are called to let Helen go, and we feel the pain of parting. But we give thanks that the Saviour who was central to Helen's life is still with us.

As my mother said, on the day of Fraser's funeral, "I feel as weak as water. But we will just have to lean all the harder on the Lord". We do seek to lean on him at this time of loss, and we give thanks that he says to us, as he alone can, "*I will never leave you, nor forsake you*". □

God is Always Good (3)

this is the third and final part of this article by

J Cameron Fraser

LAST TIME I had Cassidy Taekema's mother Sonya tell the story of Cassidy's stem-cell transplant, to illustrate how my own experience prepared me to understand and have a ministry to their family. I also mentioned that several other members of my congregation have recently been diagnosed with various types of cancer. Since last I wrote, another sufferer has been added to their numbers.

Cassidy is doing well at present, although still not fully recovered. For myself, I am in remission and have been back to full-time ministry for over a year. But what if the results had been different than they are at present? What if Cassidy had died when it seemed like she might, and I was writing as a dying man with only months to live? Would I still be able to say that God is always good? How can I say that to those whose diagnosis and future outlook is more bleak than my own?

I have found that even among some Christians, one response to catastrophic suffering in their lives is

anger with God, as if somehow they deserved better. They ask "Why me?" rather than "Why not me?" The same cry of pain can also be heard in Scripture, especially the Psalms.

Yet, as Jerry Bridges points out in his book, 'Trusting God Even When Life Hurts', we need to distinguish between asking "why" as a spontaneous cry of anguish, which is a natural human reaction, and asking "why" as a persistent and demanding accusation, which is a sinful human reaction.

"Three of the psalms begin with 'why': Why do you stand far off? Why have you forsaken me? Why have you rejected us forever?' [Psalms 10,22,74]. But each of those psalms ends on a note of trust in God. The psalm writers did not allow their 'whys' to drag on. They did not allow them to take root and grow into accusations against God. Their 'whys' were really cries of anguish, a natural reaction to pain" [p124].

This is an important distinction. God is more than capable of handling our emotions and he understands our pain. On the other

hand, to engage in persistent and demanding accusations against the providence of God is to demonstrate a profound misunderstanding that God is being unfair, when in fact if God were to be strictly fair with us, we would all be in hell. Anything short of that is grace.

Another common misunderstanding among Christians is the belief that all suffering in our lives is sent by Satan and not by God. In this way, they try to preserve their faith in the goodness of God. But this simply will not stand the test of Scripture. The classic text here is the book of Job. To be sure, Satan is the one who afflicts Job, but on each occasion it is clear that this is only because God permits him to. It is God who presented Satan with the challenge, "Have you considered my servant Job." Satan responds, "Does Job fear God for nothing?" (In other words, Job only served God because he has been so blessed by him.)

Satan continues, "*But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.*" The Lord responds, "*Very well, then, everything he has in your hands....(NIV).*" Notice that Job's possessions, his children, and ultimately Job himself are placed in Satan's hands to do with as he wishes. But Satan recognizes that in reality this is possible only because God has stretched out **His** hand and allowed all these evils to befall Job. Without God's permission, Satan

could have done nothing.

A number of years ago, a Jewish rabbi in New York by the name of Harold Kushner wrote a best-selling book called 'When Bad Things Happen to Good People'. In this book, Kushner tackles the age-old problem of how God can be both all-powerful and perfectly good. This is how he resolves it: *Let me suggest that the author of the Book of Job takes the position which neither Job nor his friends take. He believes in God's goodness and in Job's goodness, and is prepared to give up his belief...that God is all-powerful. Bad things do happen to good people in this world, but it is not God who wills it. God would like people to get what they deserve in life, but He cannot always arrange it. Forced to choose between a good God who is not totally powerful, or a powerful God who is not totally good, the author of the Book of Job chooses to believe in God's goodness.* [p42]

What is particularly troubling about Kushner's position is that one hears modifications of it in Christian circles. There is even a popular movement known as "Open Theism" held by some prominent evangelicals which postulates that God doesn't know the future and so can't be held responsible for the tragic things that come our way. He didn't cause them, he deliberately limited his power in such a way that he couldn't prevent them, and so he really does

sympathize with us as one who shares our pain but didn't cause it. The appeal of this is obvious, but the implications are devastating. If God isn't in total control all of the time, if he doesn't know the future, how can we possibly take comfort from the assurance that he will cause all things to work together for our good?

Jesus said that our heavenly Father's control is so extensive that not a sparrow falls to the ground without his knowing it, there's not a hair on your head he hasn't counted [Matt. 10:29,30]. We like that because he also tells us we're of much more value than many sparrows, so if he watches out for sparrows, how much more does he watch out for us. That makes us feel good.

But the same God who takes care of sparrows sent a worm to chew up a vine that was providing shade for the prophet Jonah and when the sun rose, *"God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, 'It would be better for me to die than to live'"* [Jonah 4:7-8, NIV]. The same God who takes care of sparrows sends worms to chew up vines when it suits his purpose. That same God says in Isaiah 45:7 *"I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things (NIV)."* He doesn't say, "I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and let

Satan create disaster." He says "I do it all, because I am in total control all of the time."

And it is precisely because He is in such total control that, even when we don't understand his purposes, we can fall back on that promise with which this series of articles began: *"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose"* [Romans 8:28, ESV]. When we read on we find that his purpose began with predestination and it ends in glorification. And its focal point is that we might be *"conformed to the image of his Son."* In other words, so that we might become like Jesus and go to be with him. Whatever it takes to accomplish that is good!

Rabbi Kushner's book was written because of the tragic suffering and death of his son and the rabbi's attempts to find answers. The suffering of our children is particularly difficult for us to understand and accept. My friend Cassidy's life-long suffering resulting in her near death falls into that category. To use a strikingly different example, so does the senseless killing of school children, which took place in Dunblane in 1996 and has been copied in other countries, particularly the United States and also here in Canada. The first of these in Canada took place in a small town near where I live. A teenager by the name of Jason Lang happened to

be in the wrong place at the wrong time and was shot dead.

Jason's father was at that time an evangelical Anglican minister. At the press conference following the shooting, he was able to state to the media and to the watching world that in his family's anguish over their son's seemingly meaningless death, his greatest comfort was that Jason loved Jesus and had gone to be with

him. Jason's nationally televised funeral was a powerful testimony to that fact.

If we really believe that the greatest blessing of all is to love Jesus, to become like him and go to be with him, then whatever it takes in this life to get us to that point is more than worth it. And that is why we can be sure that God is always good! □

LITTLE PIECES

YOU WILL HAVE noticed by now the new format of the APC News! Please feel free to send in any photographs or articles to the editor, see page 2.



GEORGE AND DONALD Macaskill ask for prayer as they go to Malawi at the end of July to speak at a Conference organised by Revd Fletcher Matandika our new minister in Vancouver. Revd Calum MacInnes went there last year. Pray that their ministries will be blessed.



REVD DR CALUM MACINNES and his wife Catherine are pictured below at the retirement dinner the Inverness congregation provided for them. They retire at the end of May. We wish them God's richest blessing.



Presbytery and Congregational News

Reporting Back

TIME MOVES ON, and your presbytery finds itself dealing with changing situations. That was the feeling on 12 May when we met in Inverness.

Following the retirement of Revd Angus Cattanach the Skye congregation presented a request to call a successor. That was the first main item of business, and is now being put in hand. Revd Malcolm MacInnes retires at the end of May, and Revd Donald Macaskill was appointed Interim Moderator of the Inverness congregation.

John Ferguson is a young man who has studied at Westminster Theological Seminary and is now completing a Ph.D. on the work of Hugh Martin (a 19 century Scottish minister and scholar). He is a member of the Dundee congregation and recently applied to be accepted as a student for the ministry in the APC. The presbytery interviewed him thoroughly and was very pleased to accept him as a student. We wish him the Lord's blessing both now and for the future.

Presbytery has ultimate responsibility for its congregations.

Reports are given on the work and condition of the congregations. This time it was the turn of Dundee and Edinburgh.

Presbytery committees' work was considered. The new Treasurer reported on behalf of the Business Committee and reminded us of our dependence on the Lord, and of the importance of congregations remitting funds regularly.

The report of the Public Relations Committee on the APC News and website led to decisions to revamp both. The Training Committee reported on work in hand. Presbytery accepted a proposal from the Church Planting Committee to begin work in an area that is new to our denomination.

Churches often have difficulty in providing for scattered rural communities. In Assynt the APC and Free Church have joint services, and the resident minister is about to retire. The presbytery was able to offer more help in providing for the people there.

CANADIAN REPORT: Presented at the 2010 Assembly

The main purpose of this recent, April 2010 visit to Canada, by Revd



Some of the Canadian Presbytery that met in Vancouver for the induction of Fletcher Matandika. Left to right: John McGill, Toronto; Gerry Epp, Vancouver, Fletcher Matandika; Hugh Fraser, Vancouver; Malcolm MacInnes, Moderator.

D.C. Macaskill and Malcolm MacInnes was the Ordination and Induction of Rev Fletcher Matandika to the Vancouver Congregation.

I want to acknowledge, and record, the Lord's goodness to us in our travels. On this side of the Atlantic, there was volcanic ash, and on the far side of Canada there was a heavy snowfall. Both of these were beyond human control, but under the hand of our God. He opened up the way for us.

We travelled out to Canada on different dates, and met up in Vancouver for the Presbytery

business. Donald came in time for the Presbytery. I had gone a few days earlier, stopping off in Toronto to see some friends from the time we lived there. The former congregation has scattered to worship in other churches, some to the Free Church congregation, some to the Irish Free Presbyterian Church, and some to the Markham First Alliance Church.

I was able to visit with some of them, and also to visit the church building which we formerly had. It is now owned by a Chinese evangelical group, and I attended the Sunday morning English service. It

was good to see so many young people. I was told by a friend that the Chinese have the fastest growing churches in the Toronto area. Our own Canadian Presbytery has money held in trust for a church plant in the Toronto area, and we are praying that the Lord will provide a man willing to go there for that work.



Revd Fletcher Matandika

Fletcher Matandika referred to a contact he had who might be the person whom the Lord would use there. The Canadian Presbytery is also considering the possibility of giving some financial help toward church-planting work in Scotland.

I spent three days in Edmonton, and met with the Flater family who have maintained their contact with us. They send their Christian greetings to you. On April 17 this

year, the group under the ministry of Bob Hackett was received into the RPCNA, and we wish them the Lord's blessing in their work and new church affiliation.

The Induction Service in Vancouver took place on April 30, and we thank God for his favour shown to us at that time. I preached at that service, and Donald Macaskill addressed the new Pastor and the Congregation.

The local Session had decided to have the Lord's Supper while we were there, so they organised for a Saturday evening service. On the Lord's Day, Donald Macaskill preached and led us as we celebrated the Lord's Supper. Fletcher Matandika preached at the second service. His theme was 'The God of the Impossible Things'. Fletcher recognises the challenges ahead, but evidenced his characteristic enthusiasm, and spoke with hope for the future. Donald and I were invited to Fletcher's home for a time of fellowship following the evening service, and it was a real pleasure to meet with, and hear from, some of the young people.

Pray for Fletcher and the congregation there. Having faced some major discouragements, they considered the possibility of disbanding, but voted to continue. They are looking for a new meeting place, with the vision to develop a Centre, with meeting rooms, accommodation, Library, and

Bookshop. Fletcher is to be married to Angella in January next year, and the obvious expectation is that she will move from Malawi to Vancouver. Pray that the required paperwork for her move to Vancouver will pass through smoothly.

Revd Donald Macaskill, who is an Assessor to the Canadian Presbytery, as is Revd Archie McPhail, has been appointed the current Moderator of the Canadian Presbytery.

Revd Fletcher Matandika plans, the Lord willing, to go in mid-July to Malawi for the Annual Conference in the African Bible College in Lilongwe, and will there meet up with George and Donald Macaskill, who are guest speakers. Since I am retiring from pastoral work, I have been asked to go back to Vancouver to preach while Fletcher is in Malawi, so Catherine, my wife, and I expect, the Lord willing, to go to Vancouver from the middle of July for four weeks. We ask for your prayers for that also.

Canada is a vast country, at one time given the name 'The Dominion of Canada', because it stretched from sea to sea, recalling the words of Psalm 72: *'His large and great dominion shall from sea to sea extend'*. Like so many other nations, our own included, that nation has moved away from God and his word. The people of Canada, like ourselves, need the Gospel with its message of

grace and forgiveness, and it is in that work of God's saving power, our hope, and theirs, must lie.

Congregational News

HARRIS

The congregation had a very nice communion in Seilabost School in May and although some of the members were unable to attend, they were encouraged by some visitors attending one of the services. The school, where all the services are held, is scheduled for closing in June 2012, so this is a matter for prayer.

STORNOWAY

The 'winter' programme of 'Fellowships', Psalmody Practices and 'Christianity Explored' have all ceased and we are now enjoying 'Missionary' visits from organisations such as Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ; Slavic Gospel Association; Steadfast Global, and look forward to a visit from Martin and Joyce Campbell who are hoping to return to Afghanistan after three years of further language study.

The Highland Theological College in Dingwall is returning to Lewis to have another Conference (to be held in the APC Church) over the fourth weekend in May. Noel Due,

once a lecturer in the College and now ministering in Australia, is expected to accompany Hector Morrison and we all look forward to that weekend.

DUNDEE

As will be seen elsewhere in the APC News, we are delighted to have John Ferguson, a student in Aberdeen, join us as a member in full fellowship. John is at present studying for a doctorate on Hugh Martin's view on the Atonement. John has applied for the ministry and has been accepted both by our Kirk Session and by the presbytery.

We are still enjoying Christianity Explored on Sunday evenings and trust that the congregation are finding it beneficial and helpful for our own walk with the Lord.

Please continue to pray for us.

EDINBURGH

Our most sincere and warmest thanks to all readers who take a prayerful and practical interest in the work here. We are humbled by your gracious behaviour.

Rev. Wayne Pierce, the Moderator of our Assembly, was unable to come South as a delegate to the other Assemblies and he asked me to stand in his place. Here is my short address to the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) and to the Free Church of Scotland.

"Moderator, fathers and brethren, it is my pleasure and

privilege to bring you genuine and warm Christian greetings from the Associated Presbyterian Churches and to assure you, that we want to see you prosper in every way that is honouring to God.

May I encourage you by saying that, Scotland needs you. That is, Scotland needs church leaders who want to honour God in preaching, teaching and practical Christian living. From various quarters, like the church in all ages, you may feel you are not wanted. Make no mistake, Scotland needs you desperately and the world needs you.

May I challenge you by asking you, How can you and I become better church leaders? How can the Free Church Continuing and the Associated Presbyterian Churches become better churches? I would like to give the following answer.

The first and greatest commandment is, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. The second is like it, Love your neighbour as yourself." 'Love is the fulfillment of the law.' Over all your virtues, I don't imagine you are very aware of them, but over all your virtues 'put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.'

Remember, though you would have the greatest reputation in the world yet have no love, you would be nothing. Though you would be the best organised but have no love you would be nothing. Though you would

be the most learned and able but have no love you would be nothing. If you were the most practical but had no love you would be nothing.

From the seven churches in Asia we learn that, the question is not only did we love God, but do we love God now? The question is not are we materially rich but are we rich in love? The question is not necessarily are we steadfast, but does our steadfastness flow from our love to God and man? The question is not always are we good workers, but do our good works spring from our love? Are we living, loving leaders? Is it true that, we are not satisfied unless in our own hearts we find love to Our Father in Heaven, Love to Christ our Saviour and Love to the Holy Spirit whose work and power we long for in greater and greater measure in our own lives and in the life of the nation. We must also have in our hearts, love to our fellow men, both friends and foes.

If our group faces up to the very comprehensive challenge of love, then we will be better leaders and a better church. I trust you are saying the same for yourselves and your denomination. "We in the name of God the Lord do wish you to be blessed." Moderator, fathers and brethren thank you. *JR*

INVERNESS

If you have visited Kingsview Christian Centre, you will have been impressed not only by the venue

itself, but by its being obviously kept clean and in good order. That has been due to the diligent work of John Lister over a number of years, in fact since the congregation moved into the premises.

Not only has he kept the facilities clean, but he prepared the rooms for the various meetings being held there. Tea, coffee, and biscuits were laid on as part of the service, and even the tradesmen and the postman benefitted from that hospitality.

John retired from the work at the end of May, and the Congregation held a special Church Lunch to mark the occasion. John and Neina, his wife, who helped him from time to time, were both presented with tokens of our appreciation.

The Moderator of Presbytery, Rev D C Macaskill, was preaching in Kingsview that day, and he expressed the Presbytery's gratitude for the work John had done for, and during, Presbytery meetings.

We wish John and Neina a long and happy retirement. John did say, when acknowledging the Presentations, that the word 'Retirement' might also be spelt 'Retyre-ment', commenting that they were not totally leaving, but hoped to be about to help in the future. Happy Retirement and Happy Retyre-ment, to them both.

(Calum MacInnes)

Watching the World Cup

by John C A Ferguson, University of Aberdeen

John has just become a divinity student in the APC, see 'Reporting Back'

RECENTLY I HEARD a professional footballer asked if he was looking forward to playing in this summer's World Cup. 'What does it mean for you to play on the world's biggest stage?' He replied that it was the fulfilment of a childhood dream, 'When I was a child playing football at the park, it was playing in the World Cup that we dreamed about.' His response reminded me of my own childhood—playing football in the park for hours on end during the long summer nights. His dream was the same as mine—and most of my friends—to play in the World Cup, and ultimately to score the winning goal in the final.

When we played in the park it was not the Scottish League or Cup that we imagined ourselves playing in, or the Champions League, or the European Championships, or any other tournament for that matter, it was the World Cup we dreamed of. We played our own 'World Cup' tournaments and divided into teams of two or three. Each team represented a different country (Brazil was always a favourite!). Two goals were required to advance to the next round, with one team

eliminated in each round, until the final when three goals were needed to win. Scoring the winning goal in the World Cup final is what we imagined ourselves doing—how many young boys (and older ones too!) have dreamed of that! It is the hope of multitudes, but in reality only one person every four years has the honour.

Today, the World Cup represents more than a game. It is a global industry. World Cup merchandise is stocked in shops all over the world—even in countries that haven't qualified (like ours!). This is an important time for technology companies as they look to sell state-of-the-art television sets. Hosting the World Cup involves a huge amount of preparation. South Africa has already benefited from improvements in infrastructure as new roads have been built and transport systems established to facilitate the influx of fans from across the world. The World Cup is also politically significant. It is the largest single-sport event in the world, and this is the first time it has been staged on the African continent. The focus of the world's attention will be drawn to South Africa to an

extent not seen since the end of the apartheid during the early 1990s. The world will be watching closely.

Not just football, but sport in general can have an important bearing on wider issues. South Africa



saw this 15 years ago, not with football's World Cup, but rather the Rugby World Cup. This documented in a film released earlier this year entitled *Invictus*, the story of Nelson Mandela and his friendship with François , captain of the South African rugby team (who are also nicknamed the 'Springboks'). The Rugby World Cup was played in South Africa in 1995 and Mandela viewed it as an opportunity to aid the unity of his nation.

The Springboks, against the odds, defeated New Zealand in the final to win the trophy. After the game, two exchanges took place that showed the wider implications of the team's achievements. Pienaar was interviewed. It was broadcast to the stadium and also on television to the world, 'François, we had 65,000 South Africans here today, tremendous support.' His reply to

the interviewer: 'David, we didn't have 65,000 South Africans, we had 43 million South Africans.' Pienaar was of course referring to the whole country as united behind them in their victory. Mandela was wearing a Springbok shirt (a statement in itself, for the jersey had previously represented racial division) with Pienaar's number on the back. As he prepared to present Pienaar with the trophy he congratulated him, 'Thank you for what you have done for South Africa.' Pienaar replied, 'No Madiba [an honorary name by which Mandela is known], thank you for what you have done for South Africa.' The Rugby World Cup in 1995 provided the platform for a display of national unity—unthinkable just a few years before—that was broadcast to the world. Sport, as Mandela foresaw, proved to be an avenue for national unity.

Sport can do that, it can bring people together in a way that otherwise might not happen. Many friendships develop through it. During this summer's World Cup many people will make new friends, from all different countries. Sport is even able to unite a nation, as people will the ball into the back of the opposing net, as they celebrate victory or despair in defeat. It is an important part of society. It is however limited in the unity it can bring. A World Cup can bring people from all over the world together, but only one country can celebrate

victory at the end. The unity it brings lasts only for a time. In the long-term it can be forgotten and the wounds it healed can re-open.

The unity found in Christ is greater. The Scriptures tell us that Christ cannot be divided (1 Corinthians 1:13). Truth is only ever found in him. His people are united to him by faith. This union with him means that we are united to him not only in this life, but also in death and in the resurrection. It is a union that lasts, not just for a time, but forever. This is what it tells us in Romans 6:5. In the same way that Jesus lived, died and rose up from the dead so also will all who put their faith in him. The bond between Christ and his people is a true bond—one that cannot be broken. It is not broken in life, nor is it broken by death, *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?”* [Romans 8:35].

Neither is his victory limited to one country. He unites people from all different nations and languages in their praise to God. Victory over death is assured for all whose faith is in him. Only six or seven nations have a realistic chance of winning the World Cup. The offer of eternal life by faith in Christ is available to all. He even unites across the most deeply rooted divisions in human history. *“Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles*

also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one. He will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith” [Romans 3:29–30].

Christ forms a new nation. He unites people of all different races, languages and nationalities. It is a nation of people who stand justified before God because of their faith in him and who may therefore enjoy peace with one another.

An illustration of the depths of the bonds that are found in Christ comes to my mind as I think of the nationalities of some of those from whom I have heard the gospel—England, Australia, Japan, Germany, Switzerland, South Korea, France, South Africa, Nigeria, Netherlands, United States and Brazil. Each of these countries has also qualified for the World Cup. Some of these teams I would like to see progress further in the tournament than others. But when I think of these nations in their relation to God, my hope, because it is the Christian hope, is the same. I hope that each person will come to know Christ as his or her saviour. The gospel brings unity where there would otherwise be none. Our union with Christ changes our lives for the best, not just for a moment.

Undoubtedly many boyhood dreams will be fulfilled over the coming month in South Africa. Savour them as they take place and remember: Christ has accomplished even greater things! □

BOOK REVIEW

by Catherine MacKenzie



'With Two Hands'

By Rebecca Davies

THIS BOOK has definitely made it into my top ten missionary books. It is a children's book but one aimed at the young of heart too. A thoroughly good read. So what's it about?

Well it's about a young man from Australia who follows God's calling to the mission but more importantly it is about an indigenous church who work alongside him in order to bring the good news to their own people. Who was this missionary, and who are the people? Well the missionary is a relatively unknown gentleman named Dick McLellan and the people are the Christians of Ethiopia. All the characters in this book are hidden heroes – you won't have heard of them in church newsletters or seen them in the chapters of books – until now.

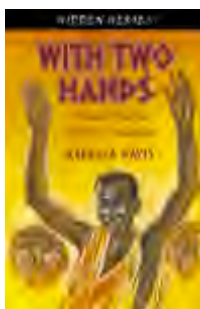
In 'With Two Hands' you will read about how God has been at work in Ethiopia – and how his work is unstoppable. Here are amazing examples of how God changes circumstances and people in order to bring forward his kingdom in some of the most unlikely places.

This is not just a typical missionary story book. It is not about how Western men and women drop

into a different culture and make the best of it. It is not about how white Christians tell black Africans what to do. It is about how our great God impacts the hearts and lives of people from all walks of life and colour of skin to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to his world.

Find out why a crippled old man waited by the side of the road every day for twenty years? Why did a lame man purposely walk to a tribe where he knew he could be killed? Find out about the invisible evangelist, the two girls who prayed and other astonishing stories. This is a book that will make you gasp at God's goodness!

And at the end of this book as you thrill at the wonderful work of God, I hope that you will join the Ethiopian Christians who with joy in their souls declared, "With this hand I renounce the devil and all his works! With this hand I surrender to



Jesus Christ! All I am and all I have!"

Book info: Series – Hidden Heroes,

Pages: 176

Trim: Trade paperback

Isbn 13:

9781845505394

List Price: £5.99

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www.apcdundee.org.uk Dens Road Church - 11
Dens Road - 11am & 6.30pm, usually Wed 7pm
(confirm on website). Treasurer: Mrs Isabella
Scrimgeour, 7 Kintail Place, Broughty Ferry, Dundee
DD5 3TA. Tel 01382 477 623 *Communions:* Last in
March, June, September, December

EDINBURGH

Revd John Ross, 6 Frogston Grove, Edinburgh, EH10
7AG Tel 0131 466 6247 jrossapc@googlemail.com
Sundays - Services at 11.30am and 5pm and Bible
Study Wed 7.30pm at 47 Southhouse Broadway,
EH17 8AS. All welcome

FORT WILLIAM

Services held jointly with the Free Church,
High Street, 11am & 6.30pm, Wednesday 7.30pm.
Contact: Donald MacNicol, 14 Altour Road, Spean
Bridge, Inverness-shire PH34 4EZ, Tel 01397 712405.

HARRIS

Contact: Mr Finlay MacLennan, Tel 01859 550252.
Seilabost School - 12 noon & 6pm
Treasurer: Mr Finlay MacLennan, 3 Seilabost, Isle of
Harris HS3 3HP Tel 01859 550252.
Communions: As intimated.

INVERNESS

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238 Arbroath Road, Dundee DD4 7SB,
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Manse: 16 Drummond Road, Inverness IV2 4NB,
Tel 01463 223983 Fax 01463 226939
Kingsview Christian Centre, Balnafetack Road,
11.30am & 6pm, Wed 7.30pm. Tel 01463 716843.
Treasurer: Mr Kenneth Macdonald, 'Arnish', 16
Drumdevan Place, Inverness IV2 4DQ,
Tel 01463 231364. www.sermonaudio.com/kingsview
Communions: Fourth in January, April, June,
September

KINLOCHBERVIE

Kinlochbervie: Day Care Centre, Main Street,
11.30am; Treasurer: W D MacLeod, 114 Insheggra,
Rhiconich, by Lairg IV27 4RH Tel 01971 521388.
Communion: Third in August

LAIRG & ROGART

Revd Dr Wayne Pearce,
APC Manse, Saval Road, Lairg, IV27 4EH,
Tel 01549 402176
Email: wayne.pearce66@btinternet.com
Lairg Church - 6pm, 1st, 3rd, 5th Weds 7pm;
Rogart Church - 11.30am. 2nd, 4th Weds 7pm.
Treasurer: Mrs Alison Mackenzie, Birchgrove, Bonar
Bridge, Sutherland, IV24 3AR. Tel. 01863 766251.
Communions: Lairg: First in June. Rogart: Third in
September.

LOCHCARRON

(Lochcarron-Lochalsh Congregation) Services held
jointly with Free Church, 11am & 6pm, Wed 7.30pm,
2nd & 3rd Lord's Day Kishorn 3pm. Treasurer: Mrs
Alison Stewart, 13 Kirkton Gardens, Lochcarron IV54
8UQ, Tel 01520 722239
Email: ajs.kishorn@tesco.net

LOCHINVER & STOER & DRUMBEG

Services held jointly with Free Church of Scotland
Morning services alternating between Stoer Free
Church & Drumbeg APC - 11am. Evening service
Lochinver Free Church at 6pm. Contacts: Mrs E.
MacKenzie, Church Road, Stoer, Sutherland, IV27
4SE, Tel 01571 855279. Mrs I Macauley, Ard Na
Mara, Stoer, Sutherland Tel 01571 855214

OBAN

Revd Archibald McPhail, MA, MTh
Fernhill, Polvinister Road, Oban PA34 5TN,
Tel 01631 567076 Email:
archibald.mcphail@virgin.net
Campbell Street Church - 11am & 6.30pm, Wed
7.30pm Treasurer: N Matheson, Carnish, Glenmore
Road, Oban PA34 4PG, Tel 01631 566259
Communions: First in May and November

PLOCKTON & KYLE

(Lochcarron-Lochalsh congregation) Contact: Donald
Stewart, 13 Kirkton Gardens, Lochcarron IV54 8UQ,
Tel 01520 722239. Email: ajs.kishorn@tesco.net
Plockton: No services at present

POOLEWE

Services meantime Inverasdale 10.30am (with
Sunday School); Aultbea 12 noon (with Sunday
School); Poolewe 6pm Treasurer/Contact: K
MacLean, Dunedin, 42 Strath, Gairloch IV21 2DB, Tel
01445 712050. Email: kendunedin@aol.com
Communion: As arranged locally

SKYE

APC Manse, 20 Glamaig Place, Portree IV51 9PJ,
Tel 01478 613258. Interim Moderator: Revd Malcolm
MacInnes, 60 Balnakyle Road, Inverness IV2 4BS Tel
01463 729603.

Portree APC Church, Staffin Road - 12 noon & 6.30pm,
Thu fortnightly 3pm; C of S, Dunvegan - 12.15 & 5pm.
Contact: Malcolm G Fawkes, 9a Fasach, Glendale, Isle
of Skye IV55 9WR Tel 01470 511368.

Communions: Portree: third in March and September,
Dunvegan: first in June

STORNOWAY

Revd George I Macaskill, BA
'The Glebe', Stoneyfield, Sandwick,
Isle of Lewis, HS2 0AP,
Tel 01851 703217, (Church 07733425498)
Email: gimacaskill@googlemail.com
72 Keith Street - 11am & 6.30pm, Thu 7.30pm.
Treasurer: Mr W K Macleod, 3 Oliver's Brae, Stornoway
HS1 2SS, Tel 01851 703796.
Email: stybillmacleod@googlemail.com
www.apcstornoway.com
Communions: third in February, last in August

TAIN & FEARN

Revd John van Eyk
APC Manse, 2 Cameron Gardens, Tain IV19 1NT,
Tel 01862 892199. Email: jvaneyk@gmail.com Tain
Church, Upper King Street - 11.30am; Hilton Church
10am, Wed 7.30pm. Joint evening services, 1st, 3rd,
5th Lord's Day Hilton, 2nd, 4th in Tain. Treasurer:
Roderick Mackenzie, Geanies House, Fearn, by Tain
IV20 1TW, Tel 01862 871000.
Email: roderick.mackenzie@geanies.org.uk
www.sermonaudio.com/tainfearnapc

WICK & STRATHY

Wick Church, Breadalbane Crescent - 11a.m, alternate
Wed 7.30pm; Strathy Church - 3pm Interim Moderator:
Revd D Ross McFarlane, 01349 862420,
drm@uwclub.net Treasurer: Wick: Mrs Mary Taylor,
Dixonfield, Thurso, KW14 8YN Tel 01847 892005.
Treasurer: Strathy: Mrs J Jappy, 113 Strathy Point, by
Thurso KW14 7RY, Tel 01641 541316. *Communions:*
Wick: last in April, Strathy: second in September

ABROAD

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Revd F Matandika, 405-425 Twelfth Street, New
Westminster, BC, V3M 4H7, Canada.
Tel 1-778-397-1568. Worshipping at Olivet Baptist, 201
Seventh St (Corner of Queens Avenue and 7th Street),
New Westminster, BC. Lord's Day 1pm, and 6.30pm,
Prayer meeting Bi-weekly on Wed 7.30pm or as
announced. Contact Hugh Fraser 604 526 0431
www.apcvan.ca

CLERK of PRESBYTERY

Revd A N McPhail, MA. MTh,
APC Manse, Polvinister Road, Oban PA34 5TN
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