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The APC News

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Assembly 2002 Issue



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THE APC GENERAL ASSEMBLY was again held in Inverness at St Stephen's Church on the 15th May 2002. It was with a measure of sadness that two of our ministerial brethren had passed away since the year began, Revd Douglas Beattie in Vancouver, Canada and Revd John W Ross in Lochcarron, Wester Ross in Scotland. They will be greatly missed and our condolences go to their widows and families.

A good number of the brethren were present to hear the delegates from other denominations speak in the evening. Details of the various speakers and the different events with which we are connected are given inside. This issue is mainly devoted to activities of the Assembly. •

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The Cause of Christ and the the Institution of the Church

MOST CHURCHES would acknowledge that the spiritual and moral state of our nation is very poor. Crime and immorality are on the increase, and there is little sign of any improvement. What is wrong?

One answer is: the Church is not being the salt of the earth and the light of the world as Christ commanded them to be. Christians have been commissioned to go into all the world and spread the Word of God among all nations and nationalities. Both Britain and America have been made great as a result of the Biblical foundations of their constitutions. Both nations are now no longer the world leaders they once were - because they have discarded these same Biblical principles.

One of the reasons for the failure of the Church's influence and effect on the world, is its reduction of Calvinism to a mere 'Five Points'! This has given the impression that Calvin only taught on the subject of salvation (known as 'soteriology').

What has happened is this - the reformed Church has **reduced** Calvin's message to five points, when in fact he had more like five thousand points of important Biblical teaching. The Five Points of

Calvinism refers **only** to the '**salvation aspect**' of Biblical teaching. Calvin's works covered a whole range of subjects which many churches never even mention. The whole area of Calvin's teaching on the diaconate (the work of deacons) has been largely ignored or forgotten.

The result is that instead of the people of God being an active army improving society, they have been reduced to a passive audience only listening to sermons. Many believers think that the Church's only task is simply to preach about the salvation of the soul alone. Whereas, Calvin taught a whole range of subjects covering every area of life. His Institutes cover some of these subjects, but there are other writings which cover even more subjects.

Calvin advocated involvement and engagement with the world - not isolation from the world. The world has to be Christianised. Business, education, politics, medicine, art, etc, all need Biblical foundational principles upon which to build their professions. The goal of the Church is to bring everything under the rule of Christ. Not until "*all things are made subject to Him*" will Christ

present “*the kingdom to God the Father*” [1 Cor 15:24-28].

Unfortunately, many people today confuse the institution of the Church with the Cause of Christ. We must never mistake the institution of the Church with what the Church was instituted for! This, sadly, has happened. It is not so much the Church that needs to be ‘guarded’ as the Cause of Christ for which the Church was instituted.

We have guarded the Church in order to ensure that the Church as an institution will remain. This is contrary to what the reformers understood concerning the Church. It is the Cause of Christ, the Truth itself, which must be ‘protected’ at all costs.

Dr James Bannerman states “The Church was established for the sake of the truth, and not the truth for the sake of the Church”! He further makes the point that the Westminster Confession defines a Church as simply, “the profession of the true religion”, and even goes so far as to say “the outward ordinances are not fundamental or essential to a Church”, adding “the administration of the sacraments is excluded from the definition of a Church in our Confession”.

Bannerman elevates the Westminster Confession above the Articles of the Church of England, which includes the sacraments as of the essence of a Church. He exalts the Westminster’s omission of the sacraments as essential to a Church.

Bannerman quotes John Owen and William Cunningham as

supporters of his contention. [See Church of Christ, Vol 1, page 57-61 , Banner of Truth].

We recommend every minister and elder to read the first 100 pages of Bannerman’s book. (One minister said to me recently, ‘the Cause of Christ is doing well, but Churches are in an awful mess’!)

What are the implications of this? One is, that many practices, habits and traditions which originated in a previous generation for the convenience of a particular culture, may now be removed without being charged with ‘heresy’! What was helpful in a bygone generation may not be helpful today.

The Bible is not against change. Even during the time of the Levitical law, changes were introduced when the culture altered - such as when the tabernacle was erected in Canaan - [see Deut 12].

Another example is Jesus stopping the habit of washing hands at the Passover. He also refused to fast. The reason? It was not fundamental to the gospel. Washing hands and fasting was helpful at one time, but He obviously thought it was now a hindrance.

It may be very painful to have to make changes. But a time comes when the Cause of Christ demands it. However, much prayer and wisdom is required to distinguish what is of the essence of the faith and what is not. Change for changes sake is to be avoided. Let us pray and seek wisdom. •

The 2002 ASSEMBLY SERMON

This sermon was preached by the retiring Moderator, the Revd Alexander Murray from Lairg, on 15th May 2002.

"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye servants of men" [1 Cor 7:23]

PAUL IS HERE teaching that such, (as the Corinthian believers), who had been privileged to be **called** to the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ, ought not to be put about over the external circumstances of the situation in which this had taken place. These circumstances should not, by any means, be permitted to override the interests of the calling itself. One such circumstance was the condition of servitude or slavery that was prevalent in Corinth, as in many parts of the Roman Empire.

That is where today's text has its place. And, as enabled, we may seek to consider:-

1. Servitude or slavery.
2. The "price" of freedom.
3. The "bond-service" of this new situation.

I. 1.) Few things in the social situation of mankind has proved to be a greater evil than the enslaving of ones fellow creature, and where service has been extorted in the absence of wages being offered. We have been singing of the cruelty of the sons of Jacob in respect of their brother Joseph, - "Ev'n Joseph, whom unnat'rally, sell for a slave did they". The rigour and bondage experienced by the people

of Israel in Egypt comes to mind; as must the fact that, it was only in 1833, that the practice was abolished in the British Empire; and, even later, in the 1860's in the U.S.A..

2.) How, then, (we may ask) does it come about that man can be found in these circumstances of slavery? He was created free under God with the royal law of liberty written in his heart. Genesis is very enlightening in this regard. For a bidder, in the person of the Serpent, came along with the false promise that Adam and Eve might be "as gods." What they had to do was to sell themselves to this master.

It was for "nought" [cf. Isa. 52:3] that they so sold themselves; and that one sin compromised the liberty of the whole race in all time to come.

3.) When the Jews were boasting to Jesus that they were never in bondage to any man He had this to say, "*Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*" [John.8:34]. It means that the "lords" who reign over us are even myriad in number. Also, it has resulted in the sinister situation that, because the susceptibilities of a slave are ingrained in us, we possess that inbuilt tendency as willing to be

led captive in every kind of direction. The mind and temperament of the slave is ours and the danger remains that we so act even when the grace of God may come to have a place in our hearts.

Again, the familiar words of [Psalm 40:6] *"mine ears thou bor'd"* recall the provision of Moses' law that, when the year of the Jubilee came round, a slave could, nevertheless, maintain and confirm for himself this status as slave [Ex. 21:5,6].

II. 1.) Already we have invoked the thought of the "market" in speaking of the Serpent's "bid" for mankind in the Garden of Eden. Sadly, the deal was done; and freedom was exchanged for bondage. What now claims our attention, however, is the presence of a New Bidder in this market-place where the souls of men appear as articles of commerce.

This new bidder that must awaken much interest in this "ring" is, in fact, the Son of God. The "lot" is a worthless thing; and, yet, this Bidder must see in it some prospect of restoration and so of use.

2.) What a market provides for is the **purchase** of an article offered for sale as the highest bid is duly made and followed by payment. The text speaks of a "price". The clear indication is that the price is, in fact, considerable and great as beyond all else that may be made; and what, therefore, secures the purchase.

Now that this price has been duly offered and paid the propriety of the Bidder in the purchased property (i.e. man) is secure.

3.) What, however, makes this doubly sure is the greatness of the price paid and as providing a margin altogether beyond what other bidders might ever advance.

It is fitting to reflect at this point on this price - as exceedingly great. Also, it is pertinent to have clarity in our minds as to the actual circumstances of this transaction.

The Market is, in fact, that of eternal justice. It was the same market operative in the Garden. Adam's acceptance of the Serpent's bid brought upon him the debt of guilt before his Creator and as duly recorded by this market of justice.

In the final analysis, therefore, it is to Divine justice, rather than to the Devil, that payment is made. In a word, then, the price is that of God's gift of His Son, in the Son giving Himself over to death at Calvary. It is a price in **blood! - The blood of God** [Acts 20:28b]

III. 1.) The deal, then, has been done! And Man, -- as a slave in the market-place of eternal justice-- has become the rightful property of the New Master, the Lord Jesus.

In the basic understanding of the situation it means that Man has exchanged service in the former situation for **service** in that of the new. It was slavery before and it is still slavery or bond-service that

remains for man-kind. The whole context of our Scripture gives eloquent witness to this fact; and that is what may properly exercise our minds, where the demand is made upon us of, *“bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”* [2 Cor. 10;5b].

The whole spectrum of living as to thoughts, words and deeds, day and night, is, first and foremost, service rendered to this new Master, Christ.

2.) Now whole-time service may itself suggest, that it will be exclusively provided for that One Master, but the text ‘goes out of its way’ (as we may say), to enforce upon us this consideration. And it does so from the direction of the obligation of basic honesty - even that the New Master has **paid** for our service, and has, in fact, **paid so fully** for it. To be found working in the field of another master will, simply, not do! To be servants of men is, at one stroke, denied to the Christian.

3.) The paradox in the situation here before us lies in the consideration that bond-service does, in fact, mean liberty; and, the more intense the ‘slavery’, the greater the **liberty** becomes. This aspect of the situation is much to the forefront in as much as it is to Christ that service is rendered.

In particular, as has just been noticed, the believer is excused from doing service to his fellow-man - liberty of which each of us should be jealous to having it realised in our daily living. *“If the Son therefore*

shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” [John. 8; 36], even from the tyrant of our sin; and it certainly, does not then become such a person to become enslaved afresh.

What is to be noticed, further - is that all the commands of the New Master are, in fact, emancipatory in their nature, and the whole of service rendered to Jesus is in these terms of the divine law of liberty.

It is the service that, in its basic nature, is quite contrary to what we term, ‘legalism’; and, yet it is a **legalism**, in service to the Master, which I must commend to each and every one of you . Indeed, if freedom is to become true or real for us it is even as **bond-service** to the Lord Christ becomes of that measure that is total and undivided. And this is the genuine liberty in which the conscience of the believer rejoices!

Here, then, is **“Liberty of Conscience”!** •



Revd John MacLean from Skye, the Free Church Delegate at our Assembly

LOYAL ADDRESS

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty The Loyal and Dutiful Address of the General Assembly of the Associated Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and Canada

May it please Your Majesty,

We, the General Assembly of the Associated Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and Canada, met at Inverness this 15th day of May 2002, desire to express our sincere loyalty and devotion to Your Majesty's person and throne.

As, in the realm of temporalities, loyalty to Your Majesty as Queen of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is sincere and undivided, so likewise, in the spiritual domain, it is an **undivided** loyalty that we assert to the Person and Throne of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; even as mindful of His word, "*no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" [John. 14:6b]. In today's multi-cultural society in our land, we are aware of the careful path that Your Majesty must tread in a spirit of tolerance. We would respectfully remind Your Majesty that the danger of betrayal is never that far distant; and, as in other things pertaining to your reign over the nation, we seek to be much in prayer, for wisdom to be granted to Your Majesty in this regard.

To Almighty God we give thanks, in this Your Majesty's Jubilee Year, for Your Majesty's gracious example in life to us over these 50 years. It is our prayer that many further years may be added to your Majesty's gracious reign. The example of regular church attendance and a dress code becoming to women is appreciated. It was somewhat of a disappointment, therefore, that arrival at Balmoral for last year's summer holiday was on the Lord's Day.

The thoughts and prayers of our people were much with Your Majesty over the time of double bereavement in respect of Your Majesty's Royal Sister and Mother. The long life of the Queen Mother with the great service that she rendered to this nation has been an inspiration to us all. While the grace of God adorns every situation of life it does so the more plainly in death, and it is that same unflinching grace that we would seek for Your Majesty; and as also for each member of the Royal Family.

"By me kings reign and princes decree justice" [Proverbs 8;15].
On behalf of the Assembly,

Alexander Murray, Moderator

Mutual Eligibility

ACT OF ASSEMBLY - 16th MAY, 2001

“The General Assembly of the Associated Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and Canada enacts and ordains that there shall be established between this Church and the Free Church of Scotland such a relationship as shall manifest and maintain the essential unity of these churches, their separate and independent jurisdiction being always preserved.

This relationship shall be carried into effect as follows:-

(a) This Church shall henceforth recognise as to status Ordained Ministers, Probationers and Elders of the Free Church of Scotland as if they were its own; and the Ministers, Probationers and Elders of that Church shall thus be eligible for Call/transfer by any Congregation of this Church as if they were already Ministers, Probationers or Elders of this Church.

(b) A Minister or Elder appointed by the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland shall be admitted to the General Assembly of the Associated Presbyterian Churches to attend its meetings with a right to deliberate but not to vote; and the General Assembly/Scottish Presbytery shall appoint a corresponding Minister or Elder on the same terms to the

General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

(c) This Act shall become operative upon an Act in similar terms being passed by the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

Note 1. The above Act of Assembly was passed unanimously at its meeting of 16th May 2001 by the APC Assembly.

2. It is understood that the Free Church Assembly at its May 2001 meeting passed an Act in similar terms.

3. Both Assemblies have invoked “Barrier Act procedures” so that, only after consideration by Presbyteries etc. and then a further debate and decision by the respective Assemblies, will the proposals become finalised.

15th May 2002 At its meeting on 15th May 2002 the Clerk reported that an overwhelming majority of the lower courts of the Church had approved the action of the General Assembly of last year, anent “Mutual Eligibility” with the Free Church of Scotland, and, accordingly, it was agreed by the Assembly that the said Act of Assembly of 2001 now become operative within the Associated Presbyterian Churches; always subject to the provisions of sub-section (c) of the said Act. •

Report of Scottish Presbytery

By Revd A M Cattnach, Retiring Moderator of Scottish Presbytery

Mr Moderator,

It falls to me, as Moderator of the Scottish Presbytery, to submit this short report on some of the events of the last year which have affected the Presbytery.

At the forefront of these must be the sad loss of our beloved brother, Revd Jackie Ross, after a long illness, in which he was marvelously upheld and enabled to do so much work for the Lord, for which we desire to give thanks to the Lord Himself. The huge crowd which gathered for his funeral, on Tuesday, 19 March, 2002, in Dingwall Free Church, is testimony, in itself, of the high esteem in which he had been held over many years. Our prayers and sympathy continue to be extended to his bereaved widow and family, together with his brothers, sisters and others who mourn his passing. Other tributes will, no doubt, be given during the meetings in May, so we will not enlarge. Other matters affecting the work of the Presbytery were:

Immediately after last year's Assembly, the Presbytery met in Viewforth Church, Edinburgh, to ordain and induct Revd Roderick MacRae to the pastoral charge of the Edinburgh congregation. From reports in the "APC News" you will see that the work of the Lord continues in that congregation. May there be fruit to God's glory and the

everlasting good of poor souls.

During this past year, our congregation in Inverness has purchased a building which it is hoped to renovate and use as a church and Christian Centre in the coming months, God willing. We trust that the Lord will prosper them in this and every other way.

The work of the Lord continues to be done, week in, week out, ministers, missionaries, elders and others, and our earnest prayer is that the preaching of God's Word, in faithfulness and love, will be blessed by God, with signs following as in days of old.

It is good to know that the divinity student, Malcolm Macleod, continues with his studies diligently. The Training of the Ministry Committee will be submitting a more detailed report, but, meantime, we give thanks for Mr Macleod and pray that others, among our young men, may be constrained to offer themselves, in God's strength, to prepare for the full-time ministry of the Word. Let our people also pray to that end, in view of the decreasing number of our ministers at present. The Lord is able to raise up others.

Let us, therefore, seek earnestly, that He would hear our prayers. Let us say with David: *"The whole earth let His glory fill. Amen, so let it be."* [Psa 72:19]. •

Moderator's Message

The new Moderator of the Scottish Presbytery writes for each issue

AS I WRITE THIS, there is a great deal of passion on the earth's surface as twenty-two men chase a football. At stake is national honour, personal prestige, and the hope, that the Cup will be theirs for four years. Commitment and concentration, are the order of the day. The prize will be won, but it may be more easily lost. Witness France ! The scene has taken on the aura of devout religion. This is not a new phenomenon. The Apostle Paul sensed in his day the passion with which athletes, and spectators alike, entered into the spirit of the event. Although they compete for a prize that is transitory, they are people with passion. How seriously do you take Jesus ?

It has been said that the greatest enemies to Christianity may be the people who say they believe in Jesus but are no longer astonished and amazed. We are allowed to cry at weddings, at funerals and perhaps even under the spell of a movie, but for much of our religion, self-composure is the expected standard. Have we allowed the accepted behavioural patterns of our church services to shape the expression of our spirits?

Before we hasten to write-off as hyped-emotionalism, any outpouring of feeling that may embarrass us, we should remember what the good Book tells us about Jesus. He saw the City Jerusalem, with its unbelieving inhabitants, and "Jesus wept". Jesus, why are you weeping? The Risen Jesus saw a woman weeping, and he asked her why she was crying. Of course, she was crying because she could not find the dead body of her Lord. She had no real reason to weep, because the dead body would be dead no more. She wept because she had not yet grasped the fact that Jesus was now alive for evermore. On the other hand, Jesus wept when he saw the people of Jerusalem because he did see and know the facts. The woman had no reason to weep; but Jesus had. He saw religious people on their way to eternity not knowing him as their Saviour and Lord. Without Jesus Christ, they, and you with them, are on the way to Hell. Is that not cause to weep, for yourself, for your family and friends, and for society?

Years ago, Andrew Bonar told Robert M McCheyne that he had just preached on the words "*The wicked shall be turned into hell*" [Ps 9:17]. McCheyne asked him, "Were you able to preach it with tears?". If Jesus came to do anything, as he glorified God on the earth, he came to save sinners from the power and punishment due to their sin. You don't have to go to Hell; you don't have to live a Christless life, but if you choose to do so, you don't have to wait till the Judgment Day to know what your destination will be. Read again the words of Andrew Bonar's text above.

Malcolm MacInnes, Moderator.

Congregational News

STORNOWAY

The congregation had its bi-annual communion and Guest Service on the last Lord's Day of May and were pleased to see one or two new faces. There have been regular Fellowships over the few months but there will be a short break from these over the summer.

The annual Congregational Outing was very well attended on a beautiful sunny day. As usual, several Missionaries visited the congregation over the spring and Rutherford House are bringing up Revd Dr Sinclair Ferguson for two meetings during June. The Good News Club closes over July and August but hopes to re-open after the August communion on the first week of September.

HARRIS

The congregation enjoyed Revd A N McPhail at its April communion. The congregation needs our prayers, as there is still a lot of illness in the congregation, and for this reason, the presbytery has appointed Messrs Donald McCuish and Donald Fraser, both Inverness, as assessor elders. Please note that the September Communion is to be held on the 22nd September which is the

FOURTH Lord's day of the month. Revd A M Cattnach is to be the preacher DV.

DUNDEE

We continue to be encouraged and wish to thank all those who have sent contributions as regular monthly donations. This has enabled us to continue having David Dow as our helper. (We still require other donations, no matter how small. They need to be made out to Associated Presbyterian Churches, Dundee at the Royal Bank of Scotland, 133 Albert Street, Dundee DD3 6PR, Branch Code 83-18-14, a/c no 100746).

David is preparing for two more missions - a youth one at the beginning of July and one in September. We are also having a Youth Day at Eileen's home near Kinross at the end of June when a barbecue and a visit to the Raptor Centre (Wild-life Centre) are the main highlights. We look forward to the congregational barbecue on 6th July at Crombie Park at 1pm.

It was encouraging to know that our leaflets around the doors, are not altogether ignored. We do not normally get much response, but this month we had two requests

within 24 hours for help with the daily necessities of food, etc. David and the minister visited these homes where real need was obvious. It was a privilege to be of help which was gratefully received.

When such requests come, we offer a 'Six-pack' which consists of 'bread, butter, jam, milk, tea and cheese'. There are 'no conditions' for receiving this pack. When asked if they wanted us to pray, none of those last week wished us to pray with them.

LAIRG/ROGART

Our small congregation is in much sadness on account of the passing away on the morning of Sabbath, the 26th May of Mrs Jessie Ross, Dornoch at the age of 102 years. Probably the oldest member in the APC it was at the age of 90 that she made a public profession of her

faith in the Saviour, and thus was permitted to continue so to witness for just short of 12 years.

Older than the Queen Mother, she had been out in church in Rogart this year. At other times she made diligent use of her minister's taped sermons. Her mind was clear till the end. She was sister to Tommy Macleod, the respected Gairloch elder. Sympathy is expressed to the bereaved relatives. "*The memory of the just is blessed*" [Prov. 10;7a].

REVD A M CATTANACH

At time of going to print, the Revd A M Cattanach from Portree, has fallen ill. He was taken to Broadford hospital but transferred to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness. His family were sent for but he has improved since then. Please pray for his full recovery. •

Associated Presbyterian Churches of Scotland

Summary Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2001

INCOME	£	£
Congregational contributions, donations, legacies		148,148
APC News, sales, subscriptions, donations, advertising		4,556
Bank Interest		1,323
		154,027
EXPENDITURE		
Salaries, National Insurance and pension premiums	125,284	
Publications	5,592	
Other expenses	8,022	
		138,898
Surplus for year		15,129

Canadian Report - May 2002

DURING THE LAST YEAR I visited Canada twice. On the first of these visits, in the second half of June last year, I was able to hear the Canadian Student for the ministry, Jerrold Lewis, preach in Edmonton Free Church. He was conducting the services there for the agreed period of a year, while continuing his studies by Distance Learning with Whitefield College in America. Since then his contract with the Free Church in Edmonton has terminated and he is to return to Vancouver where he will help with the worship services and continue with his studies.

During that first visit I also was able to visit the late Revd Douglas Beattie who had been off work for a long period and who was asking the Presbytery for further leave of absence. This was granted until the end of December last year. While on that first visit to Vancouver, we had the Lord's Supper.

The Vancouver elders and I also had meetings with Revd Sherman Ishbel, formerly a minister in the Presbyterian Reformed Church, and one of his elders. We also met with Revd Douglas Gebbie of the Presbyterian Reformed Church. Mr Ishbel had had a disagreement with the Presbyterian Reformed Church, and was interested in joining the Associated Presbyterian Churches. Our advice

to him was to first attempt reconciliation with the PRC, but that has not materialized. He is no longer interested, it seems, in joining the APC. It was agreed that I should return to Vancouver in November.

On the second visit I was with the Toronto congregation for the Lord's Supper. In Toronto, they have for the present regular pulpit supply the Revd John Bodner with whom they are very pleased. He is also an excellent singer and that has helped the praise in the services.

Following that, I visited Vancouver and as instructed by the Presbytery, the Vancouver congregation was preached vacant on 28 November 2001. It is with sadness that I have to report that Mr Beattie passed away on February 22nd this year. We wish to record our deep sympathy with Mrs Beattie and the family. May the Lord comfort and encourage them, as he alone can do. The elders, Mr Hugh Fraser and Mr Gerry Epp, have, in God's grace, done a wonderful work continuing to hold the services and to encourage the people.

Mr Malcolm MacLeod, student for the ministry, visited Toronto earlier this year for two Lord's Days, and is due to return later this summer for a similar period. Revd Donald Macaskill visited Vancouver in the Spring-time, and he will hopefully report

on his time there. During that visit the Canadian student passed successfully through his first Presbytery examination.

The plan for the future is, the Lord willing, that Revd George Macaskill visit Canada in September/October this year, and that Revd Archie MacPhail visit in March/April next year, during which time Mr Jerrold Lewis will sit his next presbytery examination. Likewise, I may visit in September/October next year.

Both in Toronto and Vancouver the congregations are small, but we thank God for the way

in which the people have so far resolved to stay together. They would love to be settled with pastors who would preach the gospel and care for the flock. As we pray that the Lord will raise up and send workers into the harvest-field, we should remember these distant places where the need is similar to our own in this country.

Malcolm MacInnes,

[Canadian Interim-Moderator

May 2002]



Some of the delegates who spoke at our Assembly. From left to right: Revd Andrew Quigley from the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie; the Revd Allan I M Maciver, of Broadford from the Free Church Continuing; the Revd David L Cross, of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England & Wales

A Challenge for US!

OUR INVERNESS congregation has purchased a former restaurant building in Kingsview, Balnafettack, and is remodelling it as a Christian Centre and place of worship.

They had a vision for the Lord and work has now begun in the massive alterations. The project will require a lot of funding - we are therefore challenged to provide the necessary finance for this initiative to be completed as soon as possible.

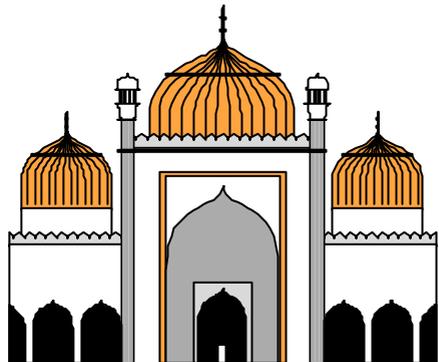
We publish the two following articles to awaken interest in our responsibilities to provide for this venture. The first article is from the Muslim world where mosques and Islamic centres are being built all over the world at an alarming rate. The message is simple: the enemies of the gospel of Jesus Christ are pouring millions of pounds into their false religions. If faith in a false god can do so much, Christians ought to do more in promoting Christ's kingdom?

The second article is from the Sandyford Church of Scotland in Glasgow. It is at present being refurbished and the letter below is the vision their minister has of the end result, and is published with his permission.

In case anyone may feel that we are being too materialistic in reminding friends of their responsibility of providing finance to improve and erect buildings for

the gospel, let us remember what the Holy Scriptures teach us. God has left on record "*for our learning*", chapter after chapter of the details of the decor of the Tabernacle. All the sizes and colours for tapestry and beams and structures are given, as God desires order, and beauty for His house. He does not want His house to be a poor 'make-shift' building. Haggai was raised up to remind the Israelites of the poor state of the Temple.

(1) In the Magazine of the Barnabas Fund, there is an article explaining the global funding of the Muslim world to build mosques and Islamic centres for the 'spreading of the word of Islam to every corner of the



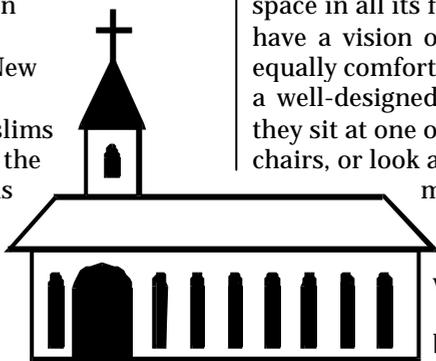
world'. The Government of Saudi Arabia is using its massive oil wealth to actively promote missions for Islam. As well as 210 large mosques

and centres, 1,500 smaller mosques, 202 colleges and almost 2,000 Islamic schools have been built in the last few years. They are zealous for the spread of Islam.

It is not just America and Europe that is the target for their evangelism. On the other side of the Pacific, Saudi-funded Islamic centres have been set up in Victoria and Queensland in Australia, and Christchurch in New Zealand.

Most Muslims think of 'giving to the poor' only in terms of either, helping their fellow Muslims or in seeking to win converts to Islam. They are

determined to 'fulfill their ambitions' of assisting Muslim countries and alleviating suffering Muslim minorities alongside promoting Islam



(2) Dear Friends

Let me share a vision of even the fabric of the Sandyford building sending out the message that God is both eternal and up to date; of the very stones and decor evoking the response "the God who inspired this building must deserve my respect. This attracts me."

I have a vision - and it is well on its way - of the outside of our building conveying the message

'there's life here'. The cleanness of the stone, the open unforbidding doors, the striking noticeboards, the access for the disabled all saying 'this is well done'.

I have a vision of newcomers getting a shock of pleasure, as they enter the wedding door, at the light in the building; receiving a sense of ease from the space in all its form and colour. I have a vision of visitors feeling equally comfortable, as one might in a well-designed library, whether they sit at one of the areas of easy chairs, or look at the bookstall, or

move to the glass screen and decide where to sit for worship.

I have a vision of it being easy for them to sit anywhere in

the worship area: with enough space between rows to get to their seat and enough space between chairs to feel easy, yet the chairs close enough to talk quietly.

In some ways when we were worshipping downstairs we established greater contact than is easy to achieve upstairs: a more direct meeting of our minds, and a freer possibility of a response, yet without losing privacy and dignity. Well, I have a vision of the new arrangement of front platform and surrounding seats promoting such a definite meeting of minds and hearts.

I will never forget the sense of positively enjoying God that there used to be in the old Tent Hall.

What a contrast with what I had been used to! There were several factors but one of them was certainly the interior: light, open, non-fussy. I have a vision of the design of our worship area contributing in the same way to the feel of Sandyford's worship.

I don't know if you have ever seen them but there are areas in the HCI hospital in Clydebank where relatives can sit and wait or meet the patient to talk. I'm not sure just what combination of factors make them so pleasurable and relaxing; but I certainly feel the effect. Well, I have a vision of parishioners and friends with an interest in spirituality feeling that kind of effect as we resource them from the library section, over a coffee, in the fellowship area. I have a vision of students feeling it as they chat after a service or drop in during the week to have a coffee and maybe even study quietly in the fellowship area, manned (as we become able) from late morning to mid evening.

That's the upstairs. What of the ministries of the downstairs areas? I have a vision of everyone at the bible study and prayer meeting being able to see the visual aids. And they will no longer have to fight sleep on account of the air quality, because the room will have fresh air ventilation quietly delivered.

I have a vision of more frequent congregational Sunday lunches furthering our friendships, made possible because of the new kitchen. I have a vision of being able to say yes easily when our local

playgroup asks to use the hall for its Christmas play and end of session prizegiving: 'yes, the heating is safe and children can now go to the bathroom without danger of falling off the ladder!'

I have a vision of the international students' cafe having a modern, relaxing, attractively decorated setting. I have a vision of disabled people being able to attend church and use all of our facilities with ease and without embarrassment.

What is all this vision about? It is about the desire to offer the Saviour to people as effectively as possible, and to explore truth with as many as can be attracted. It is about the desire to help us engage in worship. It is about the desire to enable and dignify the physically less able. It is about the desire that God's reputation should be enhanced even because our stones and decor help in these things. Do come to the special meeting on 21st May.

Yours sincerely
C Peter White.

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The zeal of the Muslims in spreading 'their gospel', and the vision of Sandyford's pastor, ought to 'inspire' us to give generously to the spread of Christ's gospel and the enhancement of Christian buildings. Let us diligently put Christ's kingdom in the forefront of our vision, so that God's name and house will be glorified. •

For Younger Readers

'FEAR NOT'

By Carine MacKenzie. This article appeared in 'The Gospel Magazine'

RECENTLY ON TELEVISION there was a report from the Artic. Apparatus, specially manufactured for use in very low temperatures, was helping deep-sea divers to examine the wreck of an old ship called the 'Breadalbane'. This ship had sunk many years ago but her crew had escaped on an ice-flow. Their reason for being in Artic waters had been to search for the famous explorer Sir John Franklin.

John Franklin was born in an inland town but after a holiday at the sea-side, he was fascinated by the sea and decided to become a sailor. He went to sea and one of his many adventures was to sail round Australia with an early explorer. He also fought in the great sea battles of Copenhagen and Trafalgar along with Nelson.

Franklin was a brave explorer and discoverer but the most important discovery of his life was made in 1820 when he was aged 35 years. He was in charge of the overland section of an expedition in the far north of Canada. The party was wintering at a desolate spot between Great Bear Lake and Great Slave Lake. It was cold and dark and still. In a written letter to his sister, John Franklin told how in this far-

away place, the Bible spoke to him with new power.

The whole book became new to him but especially beautiful was the central story of Jesus Christ's redeeming love. He had plenty of time here for serious thought and was convinced of his guilt and inability to do anything to save himself. Here he found that Christ Jesus is the Way the Truth and the Life. This surely was his greatest discovery - Jesus the Saviour and Friend. The verse that was especially precious to him was "*Fear not when thou pasest through the waters, I will be with thee*".

From that time his confidence was firmly placed on the Lord. This confidence was severely tested on many occasions. More than once Franklin faced the trial of near starvation. Once, out in the snowy waters of the Artic, the food failed. The expedition party divided into two groups. Franklin led the stronger men in an attempt to hunt for food, while the doctor stayed to nurse the weaker ones. The hunting party met with no success and gradually became weaker and weaker.

At one point a heard of reindeer trotted by but all the men

were too exhausted to shoot. Franklin remembered God's promise that was precious to him and weakly led the party in prayer.

The next entry in his diary read:- "Nov 7. 1821. Praise the Lord! We were this day rejoiced at noon by the appearance of the Indians with supplies." The Lord was indeed with him then, passing through troubled waters.

Sir John Franklin never returned alive from his last voyage. Search parties (one on the Breadalbane) were sent out to look for any trace of him or his gallant men, and for years nothing was found. But then one brave navigator Sir Francis McClintock discovered an overturned and dilapidated boat and underneath were some guns, watches, a collection of bones and some books.

It was known from documents found elsewhere that Sir John himself had died on the ship, but not before he knew that his expedition had been a success - the North-West passage had been proved to be a fact. The natives filled in some details of the men of the expedition. Most had tried to make an overland dash to safety. Many fell out on the way and it was their bones that were discovered.

But what of the books? Some bore the name of Sir John Franklin. One notebook had the page turned down to mark a passage. On it were written these words 'Are you afraid to die?' 'No!' 'No!' 'Why does the uncertainty of another state give you no concern?' 'Because God has said to me "*Fear not when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee*" '

That was Sir Franklin's text in life and in death - "*an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast*".

The words 'Fear not', appear often in the Bible. Can you find out to whom these following words were addressed?

1. 'Fear not: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward'. [Genesis 15:1]

2. 'Fear not for thy prayer is heard'. [Luke 1:13].

3. 'Fear not neither be dismayed'. [Deut 31:8].

4. 'Fear not for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake'. [2 Sam 9:7].

5. 'Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people'. [Luke 2:10].

6. 'Fear not believe only and she shall be made whole'. [Luke 8:50].

ANONYMOUS POEM

As children bring their broken toys with tears for us to mend,
I brought my broken dreams to God, because He is my friend.
But then instead of leaving Him, in peace to work alone,
I hung around and tried to help, in ways that were my own.
At last I snatched them back and cried, 'How can you be so slow?'
'My child', He said, 'What could I do...you never did let go!'

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The Next Issue

of

The APC News

is due out on

6th September

A CENTURY of MARTYRS!!

A BOUT 45 MILLION , or two thirds of all Christian martyrs in the history of the church, actually died in the twentieth century, according to a new book, [The New Persecuted: Inquiries into Anti-Christian Intolerance in the New Century of Martyrs](#) by Italian journalist Antonio Socci.

While thousands of martyrs died in places like the former Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, millions more have died for their faith in nations like Turkey, where 1.5 million Armenian Christians were murdered. The author estimates that an average of 160,000 Christians have been killed every year since 1990 in a variety of nations such as Pakistan, Sudan, Algeria and Nigeria.

While the story seems to be ignored by mass media and the wider culture, shouldn't those of us who are members of Christ's body make sure this story is told? And we should be in daily prayer for these Christian brothers and sisters who are paying the ultimate sacrifice for their faith. •

Don't Forget!

APC
CONFERENCE

on

SATURDAY
7th SEPTEMBER

at

Drumossie Hotel, Inverness

10am to 5pm

Conference Theme:

Faith, Hope, Charity

Speakers:

Prof John L MacKay, Edinburgh

Revd Noel Due, Inverness

Revd John Ross, Tain

Question time after each paper

Cost £15 including coffees and lunch

Application forms from ministers and church treasurers
Payment may be made on conference day, but numbers are
required for booking lunch. Contact:

D C Macaskill, 238 Arbroath Road, Dundee DD4 7SB
Tel 01382 451798 dcmacaskill@apchurches.org.uk

Congregational Details

DINGWALL

Revd Dr Malcom MacInnes, Drumalin, 16 Drummond Road, Inverness IV2 4NB, Tel 01463 223983, Fax 01462 226939 Email: mmacinnnes@btinternet.com Community Centre, Tulloch Street - 6pm, Tue 7.30pm in Free Church Hall. Treasurer: D M Macdonald, Scoraig, 8 Kinnetas Square, Strathpeffer IV14 9BD, Tel 01997 421847.

DUNDEE

Revd Donald C Macaskill, 238 Arbroath Road, Dundee DD4 7SB, Tel 01382 451798, Fax 01382-451764 Email: dcmacaskill@apchurches.org.uk Dens Road Church - 11 Dens Road - 11am & 6.30pm, Thu 7pm. Treasurer: Mr W J Macaulay, 4 Lomond Drive, Carnoustie, DD7 6DN, Tel 01241 853621. www.apcdundee.org.uk

EDINBURGH

Revd Roddy MacRae, 6 Frogston Grove, Edinburgh EH10 7AG. Tel 0131 445 3673. Email: roddy.barvas@blueyonder.co.uk. Viewforth Church of Scotland, 104 Gilmore Place - 12 noon & 6.15pm, Wed 7.30pm in manse. Treasurer: Mr A Cumming, 31 Doune Park, Dalgely Bay, Dunfermline, KY11 9LX Tel 01383 825637. www.welcome.to/edinburghapc

FORT WILLIAM

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

HARRIS

Contact: Norman MacDonald Tel 01859 530345. Seilabost School - 12 noon & 6pm Tue 7.30pm. Treasurer: John MacKinnon, 8 Stockinish, Isle of Harris HS3 3EN Tel 01859 530211.

INVERNESS

Revd Dr Malcolm MacInnes, Drumalin, 16 Drummond Road, Inverness IV2 4NB, Tel 01463 223983 Fax 01463 226939 Email:

mmacinnnes@btinternet.com St Stephen's Parish Church, Old Edinburgh Road - 12 noon & 6.30pm, Wed 7.30pm. Treasurer: Mr Kenneth Macdonald, 'Arnish', 16 Drumdevan Place, Inverness IV2 4DQ, Tel 01463 231364. www.apcinverness.freeuk.com

KINLOCHBERVIE

Kinlochbervie: Conference Room, Harbour Offices, 11.30am; Treasurer: W D MacLeod, 114 Inshegra, Rhiconich, by Lairg IV27 4RH Tel 01971 521388.

LAIRG & ROGART

Revd Alexander Murray, APC Manse, Saval Road, Lairg, IV27 4EH, Tel 01549 402176 Email: amurray@lairg.freereserve.co.uk Lairg Church - 11.30am, 1st, 3rd, 5th Weds 7pm; Rogart Church - 6pm. 2nd, 4th Weds 7pm. Treasurer: Miss Annie J Morrison, Woodlands, Lairg IV27 4DB; Tel 01549 402362.

LOCHCARRON

Lochcarron Village Hall - 11am & 6pm, Wed 7pm; Kishorn Meeting House 3pm on 2nd Lord's Day of month. Treasurer: Mrs Alison Stewart, 13 Kirkton Gardens, Lochcarron IV54 8UQ, Tel 01520 722239 Email: ajs.kishorn@tesco.net

LOCHINVER & STOER & DRUMBEG

Revd David Parker, Free Church Manse, Inver Terrace, Lochinver IV27 4LH, Tel 01571 844685, Free Church Stoer - 11am; APC Church, Drumbeg - 12.30pm; Free Church Lochinver - 6pm. Treasurer: Mrs E. MacKenzie, Church Road, Stoer, Sutherland, IV27 4SE, Tel 01571 855279.

OBAN

Revd Archibald McPhail, Fernhill, Polvinister Road, Oban PA34 5TN, Tel 01631 567076 Email: amcphail@quista.net Campbell Street Church - 11am & 6.30pm, Wed 7.30pm Treasurer: N Matheson, Carnish, Glenmore Road, Oban PA34, Tel 01631 566259 and D Morrison, Glenstruan, Old Shore Road, Connel, PA37, Tel 01631 710226.

PLOCKTON & KYLE

Mr J van Woerden, 8 Bank Street, Plockton IV52 8TP, Tel 01599 544272. Plockton 3pm. Email: jjan@vanwoerden.freeseerve.co.uk

POOLEWE

Services held jointly with Poolewe and Aultbea Free Church - Poolewe 10.45am, Inverasdale 4.30pm, Aultbea 6.30pm. On 4th Lord's Day of month - Poolewe 10.45am and 5.00pm with APC pulpit supply. Treasurer/Contact: K MacLean, Dunedin, 42 Strath, Gairloch IV21 2DB, Tel 01445 712050. Email: kendunedin@aol.com

SKYE

Revd Angus Cattanach, APC Manse, 20 Glamaig Place, Portree IV51 9PJ, Tel 01478 613258 Portree APC Church, Staffin Road - 12 noon & 6.30pm, Thu 7.30pm; C of S, Dunvegan - 12.15 & 5pm. Contact: Norman MacKay Royal Bank House, Portree IV51 9BX, Tel 01478 612822.

STORNOWAY

Revd George I Macaskill, APC Manse, 36 Newvalley, Isle of Lewis HS2 0DN, Tel 01851 703217, Fax 01851 703775. Email: g.i.macaskill@btinternet.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. www.treetapesministry.org

TAIN & FEARN

Revd John Ross, APC Manse, 2 Cameron Gardens, Tain IV19 1NT, Tel 01862 892199. Email: revjr@talk21.com Tain Church, Upper King Street - 11.30am & 6.30pm; Hilton Church 11.30am and 5pm, Wed 7.30pm. Treasurer: Roderick Mackenzie, Geanies House, Fearn, by Tain IV20 1TW, Tel 01862 871000. Email: cfp@geanies.org.uk

WICK & THURSO & STRATHY

Wick Church, Breadalbane Crescent - 11.30pm, alternate Wed 7.30pm; Thurso Church, Orlig Street - 6.30pm; alternate Weds 7.30pm Strathy Church - 4pm Treasurer: Wick/Thurso: Mr D S Bremner, 'Camore', 34 West Banks Avenue, Wick KW1 5LU. Tel 01955 606099. Treasurer: Strathy: Mrs J Annal, 113 Strathy Point, by Thurso KW14 7RY, Tel 01641 541316.

ABROAD

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Church: 2712 Victoria Park Avenue, North York, Ontario, M2J 4A7 Canada. Tel 001 416 491 9778 11am and 7pm, Wed 7.30pm Contact: Mrs Wilma Kling, 52 Chestertown Square, Markham, Ontario L6C 2R2 Tel 001 905 887 2017

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver: corner 15th Street & Fraser Street - 11am, and 7pm (alternate Sundays) Wed 7pm Contact: Hugh Fraser 001 604 526 0431

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: St Hilda's Church Centre, Young Road, Mount Wellington - 2pm
Contact: Donald MacLean, Tel 649 524 5747

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