

St Peter's and St Andrew's Church Thurso

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE: 1/2002

March 2002



MINISTER'S Letter

The Manse
Thurso

01847895186

Dear Friends

Normally when I write to you via the Newsletter I try and say something which I hope will help you to reflect on some aspect of Christian truth. However this time I want to fulfil a duty passed down by Presbytery, namely to keep congregations informed of the present and future problems

facing the Church of Scotland nationally. At present there are approximately 1200 ministers in the Church of Scotland. Within the next few years it is likely this number will be reduced to approximately 750. Clearly this means that the notion of each congregation having their own minister is coming to an end, and the church needs to do some serious thinking as to what ministry means in the future. Already in Caithness we are feeling the edges of what this will mean, with long-term vacant parishes and ministerial man power increasingly stretched.

However our God is the God of Hope, and it is important that we see the problems as also being an opportunity to think again about the true nature of the church and of ministry. With that in mind, I want to quote some excerpts from a recent report presented to Presbytery. Perhaps this will help you see what direction presbytery's thinking is moving in.

“As a Presbytery we must get the backing of all our congregations to make change effective and all congregations must understand that the status quo is no longer an option for Caithness.”

“...we must involve elders and others in the future ministry of the Word and pastoral care. This has now become a necessity and not an option.”

“We felt that two team ministries set up in Thurso and Wick could in time cover the whole Presbytery in terms of extended support for all the current charges within the Presbytery.”

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“...we feel in order to get the maximum number of people involved in assisting with pastoral care and leading worship, training must be provided locally...”

“(another area) that could be developed across the Presbytery is the setting up of cell/home based Bible study groups...”

The above sentiments were endorsed at a recent meeting between the Presbytery and representatives of the Central Committees of the Church. Having fulfilled the duty to keep you informed of the challenges facing the church, I am not sure what I am asking you to do: Perhaps though there are one or two things to do or to think about:

1 – Please pray that the Presbytery will be given wisdom and also sensitivity to find a way through all the issues involved.

2 – Please begin to think less in terms of a minister supported by a congregation to a congregation fulfilling its ministry with the help of a minister.

3 – Thank God for those of our number who already take part in leading worship and in pastoral care. Increasingly the church's ministry of the Word and of Pastoral care will be in the hands of lay people.

These are early days for looking at the proposals mentioned above, and yet at the same time the facing up to the manpower crises the Church is in cannot be put off any longer. But remember that God is still God. If we depend on Him there will be a way on. If we don't depend on Him we don't deserve to find a way on. It is a time to humble ourselves before our God. If we do the future could be more glorious than we can imagine.

I commend all of this to your prayers.

Your friend and minister

Kenny Borthwick

BAPTISM

Danny Ellington was baptised in the Church on the 9th of December. May God help us to remember to pray for him and all children who are part of our congregation.

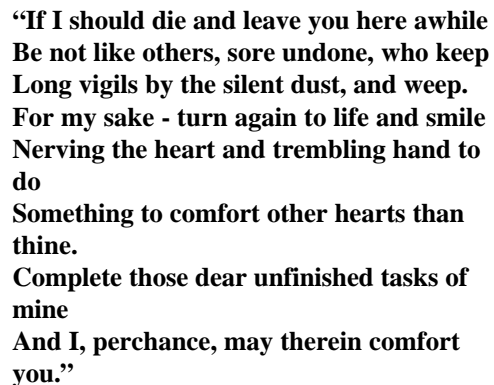
WEDDING BLESSING

On Christmas Eve 2001, Sandy and Elaine Dunnett who were married down South had their marriage blessed in the Church. We wish them God's richest blessing in their life together.

FUNERALS

Euphemia McKain – Tom Matheson Court
Henrietta Farquhar – Brownhill Road
Sharon Low – Lord Thurso Court
Alister Macleod – Clairdon, Murkle
Margaret Alexander – Robertson's Lane
David Mackenzie – Springpark Terrace
James Robertson – Freswick Gardens
Violet Shearer – Durness Street

We extend our sympathies to all who have lost loved ones.



**“If I should die and leave you here awhile
Be not like others, sore undone, who keep
Long vigils by the silent dust, and weep.
For my sake - turn again to life and smile
Nerving the heart and trembling hand to do
Something to comfort other hearts than
thine.
Complete those dear unfinished tasks of
mine
And I, perchance, may therein comfort
you.”**

Author Unknown

St Peter's and St Andrew's Church Thurso

Together@ChurchofScotland.ChristianAid

What's it all about?

The Church of Scotland and Christian Aid work together to support local organisations in some 60 countries throughout the world.

The Church of Scotland, along with 39 other denominations, uses Christian Aid as its official relief and development agency. When there is an emergency, one way the Church of Scotland responds is through Christian Aid's networks. In the long term, Christian Aid's purpose is to highlight the scandal of poverty and to contribute to its eradication. With the help of the churches, Christian Aid strives to be prophetic, challenging the systems and processes that work against the poor and marginalised.

Change will only come about as individuals, groups, church members and others are committed to a better world for all - each sharing their talents, energy, gifts and actions, to achieve what together surely is possible. You, as a member of the Church of Scotland are part of this movement for change.

Links with people around the world through Christian Aid networks and partner churches enable the church here to respond to Christ's command to feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty and clothe the naked. We have a responsibility towards the poor, the lost and the lonely in society; all are important. As Desmond Tutu said 'we are the hands and feet of God.'

Together the Church of Scotland and Christian Aid are able to put Christ's words into action throughout the world. Whenever your church has:

- collected for Christian Aid Week,
- organised fundraising events for World Mission or Christian Aid,
- prayed for these countries,
- helped to raise awareness of the plight of others in the world.

On behalf of the people in Bosnia, Mozambique and Haiti we say a heartfelt thank you for your support. In order to give expression to the part which the Church of Scotland plays in the work of Christian Aid, three projects will be given a special focus from 2001-2004.

If you want to know more about any of the projects or ways to assist financially, please contact:

**World Mission
Church of Scotland**
121 George Street
Edinburgh, EH2 4YN
Tel: 0131 225 5722 (Ext 321)
or visit www.world-mission.org

Christian Aid Scotland
759a Argyle Street
Glasgow, G3 8D5
Tel: 0141 221 7475
or visit www.christian-aid.org

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Go . . . and tell

By that time Mary had returned to the tomb and was standing outside crying. She glanced over her shoulder and saw someone standing behind her. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognise him.

'Why are you crying?' he asked her. 'Whom are you looking for?' (She thought he was the gardener.) 'Sir,' she said, 'if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.'

'Mary!' Jesus said. She turned towards him. 'Master!' she exclaimed. 'Don't touch me,' he cautioned, 'for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them that I ascend to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.'

Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them.'

John chapter 20, verses 11, 14 - 18

For a while Mary, too, was blinded to the truth because of her grief. But notice how Jesus comes on the scene and gently deals with her. When joy took the place of sorrow Jesus reminded this woman that she must tell others and so must we.

Ask God for someone to tell today, if you have found that Jesus is alive.

From "Going the Jesus Way" Text © Helen Lee, cartoon © John Pickering. Used by permission of Scripture Union.

*"Your life is a gift from God,
what you do with that life is
your gift to Him "*

Heaven and Hell — The Real Difference

A man spoke with the Lord about heaven and hell. The Lord said to the man, "Come, I will show you hell." They entered a room where a group of people sat around a huge pot of stew. Everyone was famished, desperate and starving. Each held a spoon that reached the pot, but each spoon had a handle so much longer than their own arm that it could not be used to get the stew into their own mouths. The suffering was terrible.

"Come, now I will show you heaven," the Lord said after a while. They entered another room, identical to the first—the pot of stew, the group of people, the same long-handled spoons. But there everyone was happy and well nourished.

"I don't understand," said the man. "Why are they happy here when they were miserable in the other room and everything was the same?"

The Lord smiled. "Ah, it is simple," he said. "Here they have learned to feed each other."

Ann Landers

*From A 2nd Helping of Chicken Soup For The Soul
© 1993 Jack Cranfield & Mark Victor Hansen*

Nothing Personal

"I hope you didn't take it personally, Reverend," an embarrassed woman said after a church service, "when my husband walked out during your sermon."

"I did find it rather disconcerting," the preacher replied.

"It's not a reflection on you, sir," insisted the churchgoer.

"Ralph has been walking in his sleep ever since he was a child."

Notices

2002	Kirk Session	Communion	
Month	Date	Date	Time
February	27		
March	13	3	Morning
April	10	28	Evening
May	29		
June	12	2	Morning
July	10	28	Evening
August	28		
September	11	1	Morning
October	9	27	Evening
November	27		
December	11	1	Morning
January	8	28	Evening

Notes:

- 1 Morning communion held on the first Sunday of March, June, September and December,
- 2 Evening communion held on last Sunday of April, July, October and January,
- 3 Kirk Session held on 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7.00 pm, except month before communion when it is the last Wednesday.
- 4 The Kirk Session dates are provisional and may change.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 12th-18th May

United Church Service - St Peter's and St Andrew's 6.30pm on 12th

House to House Collection Monday 13th - Saturday 18th

Men of the Churches Coffee Morning in Town Hall Saturday 18th 10am - 12noon

Sale of Work (Morning Only) upstairs in Town Hall # Saturday 18th 10am - 12noon

Your donations will be welcome at any stall. Baking, craft work, toiletries, household, bric-a-brac, books and produce.

The Christian Aid Week information is provisional based on last year. Any changes will be advised nearer the time.

Advance Notice

Church Coffee Morning
5th July 2001

see intimations for details nearer the time



The Church
of Scotland

Christian Aid
We believe in life before death

FAMILY SERVICE

Sunday 31st March

11.am

St Peter's and St Andrew's Church Thurso

RESTORATION FUND TO January 2002

Since the last report in November 2001:

(a) The new front doors have been manufactured from oak and fitted.

(b) Historic Scotland has approved in principle Grant Aid for the remaining Restoration work (less redecoration). Money will be released against each individual piece of approved completed work.

(c) Our Architect Mrs Leet returns from New Zealand in February and will then be able to progress work on:

- 1 Window Grill Protection,
- 2 Tower Floor and Louvre repairs,
- 3 Stone wall indenting,
- 4 Side door repairs, and
- 5 Plasterwork repairs and internal redecoration.

Funding to Date

Donations	40,050
Regular Giving	104,850
Tax Recovery	23,000
Events	3,300
Trustees	15,000
Grants	25,350
Historic Scotland	124,300
Interest (Net)	5,700
Cash Raised	341,550
Loans	40,000
Cash Flow	381,550
Bills Paid	324,000
Bank Balance	57,550

Forward Projection to 2001

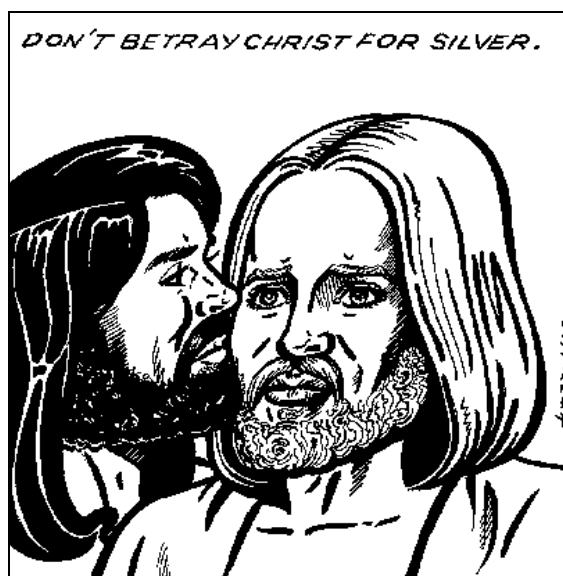
Projected Cost	375,000
plus Redecoration	10,000
Fund Target	385,000
Raised to Date	341,550
Plus:	
Historic Scotland	21,900
Pledges '02-'03	7,400
Tax Recovery	1,800
Minor Grants	11,650
Fabric Fund	3,500
(towards window grills)	
Loan Interest	-2,800
Funds Identified	385,000

Dates for your diary.

23rd February 2002 Light Factory Holiday Club Reunion/Taster session 2:00-4:00 PM at Mount Pleasant Primary School. An opportunity to meet your friends from the Light Factory and if you missed out last year, an opportunity to find out what it *was* like and you will want to join in the fun this year.

16th March 2002 Scripture Union Training Day Another Great Idea! Is the title of the conference, which is for anyone who works or wants to work with children in Sunday School, Holiday clubs, camps or S.U. groups in schools. It takes place in Culloden Academy in Inverness. Get a booking form from Linda Clarkson.

12th_16th August- Holiday Club 2002 This notice is here for those of you who want to arrange holidays in order to help out or make sure your children don't miss out!



St Peter's and St Andrew's Church Thurso



Living with unfair rules

A small village in Ghana, two hours' drive from Accra, may seem a far cry from the world of transnational corporations and international trade rules. Yet as international trade has continued to grow over the last few years, the people of Agbazo have had their lives turned upside down.

Ama Kale and her husband Samuel have seven children aged between 15 and eight months. They used to farm land which Samuel's family had rented for many years. Then one day the owner sold the land to a company exporting pineapples and papayas to the UK and Germany. The director of this company didn't trouble to give the tenant farmers any notice – he simply came and destroyed all their crops. Although this was illegal, the farmers were too poor to take him to court.



The consequences for the Kale family were devastating. Ama says: 'We didn't have enough food to eat. I had to sit by the roadside and beg. I used the money to buy soap to wash the children and porridge to feed them.' Fortunately for the Kales, Christian Aid's partner the Development Action Association (DAA) was working in their village. DAA's main work is supporting food production, and they provide small loans to help people start making a living. In particular they help people like Ama, who have been thrown off their land, to find new ways of earning an income.

For Ama, DAA provided training and a small loan. She used this to buy maize flour to make 'kenkey', a fermented dough which is eaten with fish or sauce. She sells her produce in the village and makes a small profit of around 60 pence per day. When the Kales first lost their land Samuel had to go to Accra to find work. But now he is back in the village and works as the local handyman. With his sister Mary he has bought machines to grind cassava and maize, which they rent out to villagers.

Since DAA has been working in Agbazo there has been a marked increase in the confidence of the women as the loan scheme has enabled them to provide for their families. They are now planning new projects, such as growing mushrooms and making oil.

While Christian Aid partners are helping put people back in business, Christian Aid's *Trade for Life* campaign is aiming to ensure that the benefits of trade are felt by those most in need. This year Christian Aid Week (12-18 May 2002) is focusing on how international trade rules affect the lives of people like Ama and her family.

What do you know about... scales?

- ⌚ The simplest form of weighing scales – 'the equal-arm balance' – was first used by the Egyptians around 2500 BC.
- ⌚ Today's laboratory scales can measure amounts of material to the nearest microgram (one millionth of a gram) – but they have to be kept at a constant temperature to do so.
- ⌚ Accurate scales are commended in the Bible: 'A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but an accurate weight is his delight' (Proverbs 11:1).

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- ⌚ In Shakespeare's 'The Merchant of Venice' Portia tells Shylock that his fate depends on the total accuracy of the scales: 'If the scale do turn/But in the estimation of a hair – Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate' (4:i).
- ⌚ Scales feature on Christian Aid's trade badge, highlighting the imbalance of global trade. The figure in the middle reminds us that the imbalance is the result of human rules; but it also gives us hope, because people are the solution – we must all take action to help tip the balance of trade in favour of the poor. See below for how you can order your badge and encourage others to do the same.

Talking trade

Christian Aid is campaigning as part of the Trade Justice Movement to tackle the negative impact of international trade rules on poor people, on the environment and on democracy.

Instead of bringing prosperity, trade often causes injustice and poverty, making the world's poorest people poorer. The problem is that the rules, which govern international trade, are shaped by rich governments and companies to their own advantage.

Rules are important. With the right rules, trade could bring new products, new technology and new opportunities that would help countries tackle poverty. It could create income, employment and investment for poor people. Rules could be made to work for poor people not against them.

But they have to be the right rules, fully endorsed by those they seek to protect.

As a sign of your support for the Trade for Life campaign, why not wear the badge?

Support Trade for Life, wear the badge

Badges are available in silver or red and cost £2 each. Postage and packing is £2 per order, but free if you order ten badges or more – so it makes sense to buy in bulk for your church.

To order by credit card, phone 01252 669628.
Cheques should be made payable to Christian Aid and sent to Christian Aid Trade Badge, PO Box 95, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU12 4GL. Remember to include a return address.



For more information on how trade rules are affecting the lives of people worldwide, call 0207 523 2225 or visit www.christian-aid.org.uk/campaigns

Church of the Covered Dish



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THE IMAGE OF THE CROSS

Nestled deep in the Rocky Mountains of North America stands a rugged peak. For nine months each year it lies robed in snow, indistinguishable from a dozen others surrounding it.

But as summer arrives and the air warms, the mountain slowly sheds its blanket of white, revealing a massive emblem. High above the neighbouring valleys, an 1100-foot vertical gouge bisects a 400-foot horizontal groove, forming an almost perfect image of the cross of Christ. This sight is so impressive that famous American artist Thomas Moran visited the mountain to paint it in 1875. The peak is aptly named "The Mountain of the Holy Cross."

In winter, only an expert could single out this particular peak from those around it. But in summer, any child could look at these mountains and easily choose "the one with the cross on it." The only real difference in this mountain and the all the others is the enormous image etched into its face.

We spend much of our lives creating a thick layer of "achievements." We climb the career ladder, push our kids to excel, move to a better neighbourhood, and pursue another degree, all in the hope that we will somehow become more popular, wealthy, powerful, or influential. Like a thick blanket of snow our conquests and achievements cover us, deposited one tiny flake at a time until we are totally obscured. For many of us, self-esteem and self-worth come from what we have accomplished or how much we can buy or who we know.



Thomas Moran, *Mountain of the Holy Cross*, 1875, Autry Museum of Western Heritage, Los Angeles.

Yet one day we will awaken to a new reality, an endless day in which all our values will be turned upside down. All that we have done, said, created, bought, and built will be brushed away, melted like snow under the gaze of our eternal Father. Deep within each one of us he will seek the one thing, the only thing he truly cares about, the imprint of the cross, the mark of his Son.

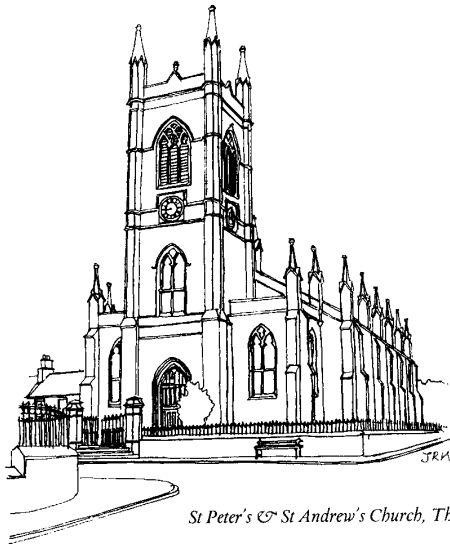
Nothing else matters to Him. And on that day, nothing else will matter to you. Do you possess the one thing that really matters?

Mark Phillips

Ladies Bible Study continues to meet Mondays at 1:30-3:00 PM. We are studying the life of Joseph this session. It is an informal group and we welcome new comers.

Bible Study Dates	Venue
4th February	16/18 Campbell Street, Thurso, Jennifer Gordan
11th February	Holiday
18th February	22 Ola Drive, Thurso, Linda Clarkston
25th February	22 Ola Drive, Thurso, Linda Clarkston
4th March	16/18 Campbell Street, Thurso, Jennifer Gordan
11th March	16/18 Campbell Street, Thurso, Jennifer Gordan
18th March	22 Ola Drive, Thurso, Linda Clarkston
25th March	22 Ola Drive, Thurso, Linda Clarkston

St Peter's and St Andrew's Church Thurso



St Peter's & St Andrew's Church, Thurso

Our church participates in the **Scotland's Churches Scheme** and have an entry in the *Cathedrals Abbeys and Churches in Scotland* gazetteer. The illustration above, by John R Hume, accompanied our entry in the gazetteer.

We intend opening the church during July and August. The times are normally 2 pm - 4 pm and 7 pm - 8 pm. Volunteers are needed to man the church during these times. Particularly someone to organise the volunteers and the information to the visitors.

If you are interested please let Hector MacLean know.

A Hymn For Gardeners

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures
great and small
All things wise and wonderful the Lord
God made them all.
But what we never mention though garden-
ers know it's true,
Is when He made the goodies, He made the
baddies too!

*All things spray and swatable, diseases
great and small,
All things paraquatable, the Lord God
made them all.
The greenfly on the roses, the maggots in
the peas,
Manure that fills our noses, He also gave
us these.*

The Fungus on the goosegogs, the clubroot
on the greens,
The slugs that eat the lettuce and chew the
aubergines.

All things etc.

The drought that kills the fuchsias, the frost
that nips the buds,
The rain that drowns the seedlings, the
blight that hits the spuds.

All things etc.

The midges and mosquitoes, the nettles and
the weeds,
The pigeons on the green-stuff, the spar-
rows in the seeds.

All things etc.

The fly that gets the carrots, the wasp that
eats the plums, How black the gardener's
outlook though green may be his thumb.

All things etc.

But still we gardeners labour, midst vegeta-
bles and flowers,
And pray what hits our neighbours will
somewhat bypass ours!

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures
great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, the Lord
God made all.

She Remembered

My mother is the sweetest, most kind-hearted person you would ever want to meet. She was always very bright and articulate, and would do anything for anyone. We've always had a close and special relationship. She is also someone whose brain is being ravaged and whose identity is being stripped away slowly because of Alzheimer's disease. She has been slipping away from us for 10 years now. For me, it is a constant death, a slow letting go and a continual grieving process. Although she had lost almost all ability to care for herself, she at least still knew her immediate family. I knew the day would come when that, too, would change and finally, about two-and-a-half years ago, that day came.

My parents would visit us almost daily and we would have a pleasant time, but suddenly there was a connection missing. My mother no longer knew me as her daughter. She would tell my father, "Oh, they are such nice people." Telling her I was her daughter made no difference at all. I had now joined the ranks of a "nice neighbor." When I would hug her good-bye, I would close my eyes and imagine that this was my mother from years ago. I would drink in every familiar sensation that I have known for 36 years—her warm comforting body, the squeeze of her arms and the soft, sweet smell that was hers alone.

This part of the disease was difficult for me to accept and deal with. I was going through a rough time in my life and particularly felt the need for my mother. I prayed for us both and about how much I needed her.

One late summer afternoon while I was preparing dinner, my prayers were answered and I was taken by surprise. My parents and husband were outside on the patio when my mother suddenly jumped up as if hit by a bolt of lightning. She ran into the kitchen, grabbed me gently from behind and turned me around. With a deep sense of knowledge in her eyes that seemed to transcend time and space, she tearfully and with great emotion asked me if it was true, was I her baby? Overwhelmed with emotion, I cried, yes, it was true. We hugged and cried and neither of us wanted to let go of this magical moment. I knew it could disappear as quickly as it came. She said she felt a closeness to me and that I was a nice person, but that it had come to her suddenly that I was her child. We felt relief and joy. I took this gift from God and savored it, even if it were to last just for that moment or hour or day. We were given a reprieve from that awful disease and we had a special connection again. There was a sparkle back in her eye that had been gone for a long time.

Although my mother's condition has continued to deteriorate, she remembers who I am and it has been a year since that sweet summer afternoon. She gives me a special look and smile that seems to say, "We are in on a secret that no one else knows about." A few months ago when she was here and we had another visitor, she started stroking my hair and told them proudly, "Did you know that she was my baby?"

L i s a B o y d

From A 2nd Helping of Chicken Soup For The Soul
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St Peter's and St Andrew's Church Thurso



GUILD NEWS

Since the last Guild report written in mid-November our management team has survived the "trauma" of organising the 'United Guilds' Christmas dinner when approximately 172 ladies enjoyed an excellent meal in the Pentland Hotel. The "terrors" of providing entertainment for the company proved much less than we feared and our efforts seemed to have been enjoyed by all. Even we, the "artistes" (if we can use such a term) managed to enjoy ourselves. At the end on the evening we were all smiles. It will be six or seven years before we'll be called to perform again! Bliss!

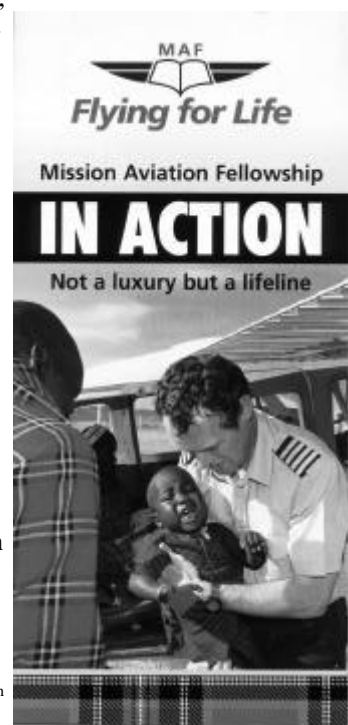
Our final meeting of 2001 consisted of several demonstrations of Christmas crafts by Mrs Linda Bell and three of her friends from Murkle and Dunnet W.R.I.'s. We very interested by the skills of these ladies and also by the simplicity of some of the ideas. Hopefully, over the next year we'll gather together lots of the bits and pieces required and by next Christmas be trying these ideas out for ourselves.

Because Mr Borthwick, who usually begins our New Year session, was not available 2002 started with two videos of the work of Mission Aviation Fellowship one of our chosen projects. The first followed the career of one of their pilots from his life flying helicopters in Northern Ireland and other trouble spots to his commitment to the work of M.A.F. The second was specially made for the guild and showed how our donations help the people of Papua New Guinea.

Our link with St. Ninians, Aberdeen, continues to flourish. Four of our members enjoyed a trip in November to take a guild meeting. We were made most welcome and enjoyed a beautiful buffet meal with their members. Aberdeen Presbyterial Council has links with Malawi and over the years our members have knitted small vests etc. which we have contributed to their ongoing support for children in that country. This year, as well as collecting a substantial quantity of baby clothing, we have been able to give a donation of £50 to help with the cost of transport. Other contributions have been made to our Congregational Board, Miss Christine Stone, Achvarasdale and our youth worker.

As well as our regular meetings, yet to come, we will be joining in the World Day of Prayer (*men please note that it is no longer the Women's Day of Prayer*) in St. Anne's on Friday 1st March at 7pm, and on the afternoon of that day we will be sharing with the West Church in taking a service in Pentland View.

Other dates to note are - April 1st United Easter Service; April 20th Coffee Morning to raise funds for M.A.F. and Lodging House Mission.



**Please feel free to join in any of the above ventures.
You will be made most welcome.**

Wilma Miller

Dates to Remember

1st April	Easter Praise
20th April	Coffee Morning in Band Room

Edited by Hector M MacLean for the members and friends of St Peter's and St Andrew's Church Thurso. Many thanks to all who contributed. Contributions not used may be used in later issues.