

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE: 2/2003

June 2003



MINISTER'S LETTER

**The Manse
Thurso**

01847895186

Dear Friends

As you will have noticed there have been a few changes in the church lately. First of all we have installed a new sound system which is more suitable for church worship as it has developed in recent times. Our thanks are due to many people for the time they gave to getting the system planned and up and running, but most especially to

Roger Bowser, David Malcolm and John Brock for giving so much of their time and skills. This has saved us several thousand pounds as a congregation.

Also we are in the process of altering layout and seating arrangements at the front of the church so that there can be an appropriate space for the Choir and the Praise Group and "Body and Soul" all of whom play equally important and vital roles in leading us all in worship. To date we have done just about all that we can without getting permission from the Presbytery and Edinburgh in terms of rearranging seating etc. We hope eventually to do a few more alterations and the Board will do its best to keep you informed.

However there is one other change I want to draw to your attention and that is that now after every morning service there is the opportunity for anyone who wishes to, to stay behind for a few moments to receive prayer. This is something that we have been familiar with on Sunday evenings for almost ten years, and those involved in leading this prayer ministry time felt it would be good to make this available after the morning service as well. I am very much in agreement with this.

I found it very interesting when I was in Canada lately - using some holiday entitlement to preach at various churches - just to see the variety of people that would come up to me for prayer after I had preached. I can think for example of a retired judge, a teenage boy with depression, and a detective who was troubled in his mind because of a multiple murder case he was working on. All came for prayer for vastly different reasons, yet each one was helped by the power of God. I saw the same sort of thing a few months ago in Holland

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when doing similar work. I have been wondering lately why it was that people were more likely to come to me as a visiting speaker for prayer than to receive prayer from the congregation they would have been worshipping with week by week. I wonder if it isn't that somehow we forget that God's power can bless us through the people we see around us Sunday by Sunday. As I think of those who will be available to pray with you on Sunday mornings, I think of how God has chosen to use them in the past to minister healing, help, and God's prophetic word to people. Don't undervalue the way that God can use the "ordinary" Christians who you worship with week by week to bless you.

What happens if you decide you want prayer on a Sunday morning? Basically two people from a rota, who have undertaken prayer ministry training will ask you what you want prayer for and then will pray with you! It is as simple as that. Confidentiality is a high priority they have been told to respect. They will do nothing that will embarrass you.

"Why do I need someone to pray with me? God knows where I am! He can bless me without others praying! Right?" Well actually, both right and wrong. Of course God can do what he wants, and can if he chooses meet your need direct without anyone else praying for. But it is his purpose according to his Word to make the members of the church of Christ interdependent like the different parts of a body. If I had not let other people pray with me over the years, I would never have received the power of the Spirit to enable me to do what I do now. If people had not prayed with me and for me over the years I would not still be in the ministry.

As I write this letter I have just got word of my sixth funeral in seven days, such is the shortage of ministerial manpower. With the

way things are in the Presbytery at the moment we really need to get hold of this idea of the church being the body of Christ, and get away from the idea that in church there is one person carrying the title and the responsibility of being "The Minister." We are all meant to minister Christ to one another and this prayer time at the end of the Sunday Morning service is one way of doing that. So don't be shy and don't be nervous. The changes at the front of the church, although they are the sort of thing that people notice and talk (or grumble!) about are not so important in comparison with this new opportunity for prayer. I commend it to you all.

I should say that if you are interested in joining the Prayer Team, please feel free to speak to myself or Morag or to John or Jean Brock to find out what is involved in terms of training, time commitment etc.

Your friend and minister

Kenny Borthwick

Baptism

It was a delight for us that on Easter Day, Simon Mcphee was brought for baptism by his parents Isaac and Josie.

New Member

How happy it made so many of us to see Nicola Rigg join the church by Profession of Faith at our last Communion Service. We hope that taking that step will help her to continue to live out her commitment to Jesus Christ.

Anyone interested in discussing membership should feel free to speak to the minister or to their elder. Opportunity for joining

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the church is given at each morning communion service.

Funerals

Mr. William Macleod, High Street
Mr. James Swanson, Oldfield Terrace
Mr. Thomas Stuart, Castle Terrace
Mr. George Sutherland, Rose Street
Mrs. Jean Mather, Pentland View
Mrs. Sydney Campbell, Mt. Pleasant Road
Mr. Marcus Gunn, Duncan Street
Mrs. Cathy Anderson, Riverside Place
Mrs. Katie Mackay, Pentland View

We extend our sympathy to those who have lost loved ones.

We should love one another as children of God.

Also serve one another as
Brothers and Sisters.

We should serve the Lord with
all our hearts.

Also offer hospitality to one another,
to cook and feed one another up
in Jesus.

We should wash one another's
feet
as servants of Jesus.

We should share our needs with
one another
and pray for our Brothers and
Sisters in need.

We should care for the flock of
sheep as I have had care
and care for the community
can lead people into the kingdom
of Jesus.

Care for the people and the
sheep know his voice.

God bless you with love in Jesus'
name
from your sister Alison Gibbon.

Pause A While

Go beyond the idea of what I can do
for God, to what he can do through
me.

The happiest people seem to be those
who have no particular reason for
being happy, except they are so

Pray for the courage to change what
can be changed and the patience to
bear what cannot.

What would a wave of honesty do for
Britain?

Skeletons disintegrate when they are
hailed out of the cupboard.

If you cannot speak from conviction -
better not to speak at all.

Never have a sense of mission - only
what needs to be done.

In the quietness of the morning we
can get God's direction for the whole
day.

Notices

2002	Kirk Ses- sion	Communion	
Month	Date	Date	Time
December		1	Morning
2003	Kirk Ses- sion	Communion	
January		26	Evening
February			
March		2	Morning
April		27	Evening
May			
June		1	Morning
July		27	Evening
August			
September		7	Morning
October		26	Evening
November			
December		7	Morning

**The Church Family
Outing will be on
Saturday 28th
June at Olig
House.**

This is a great opportunity to get to know the church family better and to enjoy fun, games and good food.

The annual prize giving service

will be on Sunday 29th
June at 11:00.

The children of the Sunday club
will take part and young mem-
bers of the church family will
receive a book



The Light Factory Holiday Club for primary School aged children will run from the 11th - 15th August 2003.

Over 100 children attended last year and your prayers are needed as the planning gets under way for this year. We need volunteer helpers, finance and receptive children and God's blessing to make it work.

Thank you to the Guild whose donation gets us off to a good start.

We held a very successful reunion in February and the children are really looking forward to this years club which will be themed 'The Desert Detectives'.



**The Church
of Scotland**

St Peter's and St Andrew's Church Thurso

RESTORATION FUND TO MAY 2003

Since the last report in January 2003 :

(a Loan repayment of £4,000 made and church hall doorway stone indenting completed..

(b The remaining work costing £25,000 covers :

1. Install improved lighting.
2. Restore remaining plasterwork.
3. Redecorate church interior.

(c The lighting improvements have been approved by the Edinburgh Artistic Matters Committee.

(d The remaining work should be completed in the coming months, at which time I shall be able to write, confirming completion, to all the regular contributors for this work. This will then allow them to stop contributing or redirect this giving to other parts of the Church's effort.

Funding to Date

Donations	41,600
Regular Giving	114,750
Tax Recovery	25,400
Events	3,200
Trustees	20,000
Grants	43,450
Historic Scotland	144,900
Interest (Net)	4,950
Cash Raised	398,250
Loans	4,000
Cash Flow	402,250
Bills Paid	377,150
Bank Balance	25,050

Forward Projection to 2003

Projected Cost (including lighting) plus Redecoration and Plasterwork	385,000
Fund Target	401,400
Raised to Date	398,250
Plus:	
Historic Scotland	1,000
Pledges '03	1,550
Tax Recovery	350
Minor Grants(Baird & Trustees)	
Loan Interest	-100
Funds Identified	401,400

James Houston,
Restoration Fund
Treasurer
28 April 2003

Advance dates:

17th August - Holiday Club Family Service

31st August - Sunday Club starts

The Sunday Club would like to pilot a family service on Sunday 15th June at 10:00 - 10:45am. While anyone who is interested will be welcome to attend, this service is aimed at families and young people who do not normally attend the service at 11:00am. We encourage parents of children at Sunday Club to stay with their children, teenagers and families with young children to feel welcome.

We hope to share worship in a lively and engaging way. The Sunday Club are using new SALT programme which is about Sharing And Learning Together. It invites people of all ages to join together on a journey of discovery, to explore and respond to Gods word in the Bible.

Worship

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"PUT YOUR CAPTAIN'S NAME IN IT"

An ungodly sea captain lay dying in his cabin in mid-ocean, death staring him in the face. He shrank back in the presence of the 'King of Terrors,' and the dread of Eternity took fast hold upon him. Captain Coutts sent for his first mate, and said, 'Williams, please get down on your knees and pray for a fellow. I have been very wicked, as you know, and I expect I shall go this time.'

'I am not a praying man, Captain; so I can't pray. I would if I could.'

'Well, then, bring a Bible and read me a bit, for my rope is about run out.'

'I have no Bible, Captain, you know, I am not a religious man.'

'Then send for Thomas, the second mate,' said the Captain—'perhaps he can pray a bit.'

The second mate was soon in the presence of his dying Captain, who said to him, 'I say, Thomas, I am afraid I am bound for Eternity this trip; get down and pray for me. Ask God to have mercy on my poor soul.'

'I would gladly do it to oblige you, Captain—if I could; but I have not prayed since I was a lad.'

'Have you a Bible, then, to read to me?'

'No, Captain, I have no Bible.'

Alas! for the poor Captain. How awful his condition—on the brink of Eternity and without Christ. They searched the ship over for a man who could pray, but they searched in vain; and for a Bible, but one could not be found until one of the sailors told the Captain he had seen a book that looked like a Bible in the hands of the cook's boy, a little fellow named Willie Platt.

'Send at once,' said the Captain, 'and see if the boy has a Bible.'

The sailor hurried off to find Willie, and said to him, 'Sonny, have you a Bible?'

'Yes, sir, but I only read it in my own time.'

'Oh, that is all right, my lad; take the Bible and go to the Captain's cabin. He is very sick and wants a Bible—thinks he is going to die.'

Away went Willie with his Bible to the Captain's cabin.

'Have you a Bible, my boy?'

'Yes, Captain.'

'Then sit down, and find something in it that will help me, for I am afraid I am going to die. Find something about God having mercy on a sinner like me—and read it to me.' Well, there was one chapter he and his mother loved—Isaiah 53—and often had they read it together. So Willie turned to that blessed chapter that so fully sets forth the love and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, in dying for such as John Coutts; and began to read.

When he got to the fifth verse— "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; And by His stripes we are healed"— the Captain, who was listening intently, said, 'Stop, my boy, that sounds like it; read it again.'

Once more the boy read over the blessed words, "He was wounded for our transgressions." 'Ay, my lad, that's good—that's it, sure.' These words from the Captain encouraged Willie, and he said, 'Captain, when I was reading that verse at home, mother made me put my name in it. May I put it in now.'

'Certainly, sonny; put your name in it just as your mother told you, and read it again.'

Reverently and slowly the boy read the verse: 'He—Jesus—was wounded for Willie Platt's transgressions—He was bruised for Willie Platt's iniquities,' and so on.

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When Willie had finished, the Captain was halfway over the side of the bed, and reaching toward the lad he said, 'My boy, put your Captain's name in the verse and read it again.'

Then the lad slowly read the verse again: 'He was wounded for John Coutts's transgressions, He was bruised for John Coutts' iniquities: The chastisement of John Coutts's peace was upon Him: and by His stripes John Coutts is healed.'

When Willie had finished, the Captain said, 'That will do, my lad, you may go now.' Then the Captain lay back on his pillow and repeated over and over again those precious words of Isaiah 53: 5, putting in his own name each time, and as he did so, the joy of heaven filled his soul—he was saved! Yes, praise the Lord, he was saved! Another poor sinner saved, for whom Jesus died.

The soul of Captain Coutts soon passed away. His body was rolled in canvas, placed upon a plank, and allowed to slide overboard into the water, to be seen no more until Jesus comes and the sea gives up its dead.

Before John Courts fell asleep in Jesus, he had witnessed to everyone on his vessel that the Christ of God—the Man of Calvary—was wounded for his transgressions, was bruised for his iniquities, and the chastisement that he so richly deserved had fallen on him.

Blessed Substitute—and by His stripes—the stripes that fell on Jesus— he, John Coutts, had been healed. Can you, my reader, say the same?

**Jesus, my Saviour, on Calvary's tree
Paid the great debt, and my soul He set free,
Oh, it was wonderful—how could it be?
Dying for me—for me.**

GEORGE CUTTING

KINGSTON BIBLE TRUST, WEMBLEY GARDENS, LANCING, WEST SUSSEX, BN15 9LX, ENGLAND

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St Andrews, Fife

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FOR ALL THE FAMILY - WORSHIP,
TEACHING & THE MINISTRY OF JESUS
IN THE LOVE OF THE FATHER AND
THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



GUILD REPORT

Now that our guild meetings are over for this session we are able to look back on a varied and interesting programme based on our theme “Strength through God’s empowerment”. Some of our more recent visitors were the Salvation Army Songsters, Keiss Church choir and some ladies from Wick Baptist Church, all of whom provided us with spiritually inspired programmes of words and music. At the last of these meetings we were pleased to welcome guests from Olrig and Reay guilds.

One of our most enjoyable evenings was when we were joined by our own young people from both Sunday Club and Body and Soul. This meeting was open to all the congregation and provided an opportunity, not only for our members to learn what the youngsters were doing, but also enabled the children and some of their parents to learn something of what the guild does- it doesn’t just make cups of tea! As well as helping with the church open day, the annual Achvarasdal fete, afternoon services in residential homes and church coffee mornings the guild has donated around £900 to national projects, Achvarasdale House and various other church based activities.

At our A.G.M. Jasmine Calder, Ramona Morris and Sheryl Polson were elected to our management team. They replaced Jan Carver, Betty Grant and Isobel Malcolm who are having a well-earned rest from the team. Mary Chalmers has once again become our contact person and will be leading us as we plan next session’s programme based on the theme “Dare To Care”.

Our session ended with Easter Praise, an evening of song, poems and readings with contributions from all the neighbourhood guilds. This was hosted by the Salvation Army and was truly a wonderful evening of praise and fellowship.

We are now looking forward to a council rally in Bower Church in June where the guest speaker will be Mrs Marjory Clark, the Scottish co-ordinator of Christian Aid, and also to a guild outing in early August. We wish to thank Gordon Noble for regularly providing transport for some of our ladies and also to thank other members of the congregation who have helped and supported us during the year.

Wilma Miller

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