

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

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2:2006

Autumn 2006

MINISTER'S LETTER



**Thurso Manse
Rose Street
Thurso
KW1 5LS**

01847 895186

Dear Friends,

Beryl and I would like to thank you all for the opportunity and the privilege of sharing in the life and work of St. Peter's and St. Andrew's.

While our time here will be very brief yet it will be an enriching experience for us and hopefully for you all. Do feel free to drop in and see us in the manse. And do let us know if there are people, sick or with problems, who would appreciate a pastoral visit.

It has been said that our real, inward nature is only truly revealed when, in an unexpected emergency we act on the spur of the moment, automatically as it were, without time for prior thought.

In Mark 4:35-41 we're told how the frightened disciples, fearful that their boat would be swamped, awoke the sleeping Jesus and conveyed to Him their desperate plight.

Notice that the awakened Jesus did not pray to God (which under the circumstances would have been the normal reaction of a man faced with such a life-threatening situation). Rather, Jesus acted as God.

He simply spoke to the raging elements and they obeyed Him. The significance of this should be pondered for, in this incident, we have a unique insight into Jesus' self-consciousness.

Clearly, it was natural for Jesus to think of Himself as Divine and to act accordingly. And remember that this is the One who, as Christians, we worship and serve; One who

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was conscious that he was more than man,
One who knew in His inner being that He
was the eternal Son of God. Accordingly, as
we travel through life with all of its storms
and rough waters, let us keep the eyes of
our faith firmly fixed on Him.

Yours very sincerely,

Douglas Anderson

Locum Minister



WEDDINGS

Lisa Sinclair and Andrew Cormack
Laura Sutherland and John Gunn
Mary Young and Richard Fraser

Thank God

Thank God you can't call him too often.

You only need to ring once and God hears
you. Because of Jesus, you never get a
busy signal. God takes each call
personally.

He knows each caller personally. Best of
all, God often calls us. Are you waiting
for his call or will your answering ma-
chine talk to him?

If you listen carefully, you will hear music
in the background and God singing,

"I just called to say I love you!

I just called to say how much I care...."

by **Rev. Paul Kummer**

**Pastor of the Grace Lutheran Church
Destin, Florida.**



Communion

SUNDAY
10th September
11.00 am



**"Thy body, broken for my sake
My bread from heaven shall be
Thy testamental cup I take
And thus remember Thee"**

James Montgomery

Church Coffee Morning

**PLEASE NOTE
CHANGE OF FORMAT**

**The Church's Annual Coffee
Morning and Sale will be held
on Saturday 16th September in
the Royal British Legion from
10.00 am to 1.00 pm.**

**There will be Cake and Produce
Stalls. Donations for both will
be gratefully accepted.**

Robert Allan

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The Middle East Conflict

"On 18 July I wrote to the Prime Minister urging him to use all means at his disposal to press for an immediate cease fire in the Middle East. At the same time, I wrote to all our partner churches in the region to express our deep concern and solidarity, and they have now shared their experiences with us. For example, Joseph Kassab, the General Secretary of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, our partner church, wrote:"

"The daily aggression and violence against civilians and innocent children brought back the memories of the Lebanese war that we suffered (1975-1990). The severe damage of the houses, factories, infrastructure and trucks, has destroyed the Lebanese dream of prosperity and development. The efforts of sixteen years in rebuilding the country were lost in sixteen days. And what makes it worse is that the Security Council could not even decide to call for a cease fire."

"Emergency grants from our World Mission Council and Mission and Renewal Fund have enabled us to send £40,000 to the Synod to assist with their relief work. However, I am also aware that there will be many in our congregations and parishes who wish to respond to the humanitarian crisis which has enveloped the region in the wake of this heart rending conflict. I therefore commend to you the Middle East Crisis Appeal which has been launched by Christian Aid, our own relief and development agency. Through its local partners, Christian Aid is able to supply desperately needed relief in Lebanon, Israel and Gaza.

"A radical and distinctive action of the Church at such a time of crisis is to pray - for justice, for peace and for healing. I invite you and your congregation to join with me in this prayer

The prayer was written in Bethlehem and Jerusalem yesterday by Rev Dr Mitri Raheb, General Director of the Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church and Rev Jane Barron, Minister of St Andrew's Jerusalem."

Right Rev Alan McDonald
Moderator of the General Assembly
11th August 2006

A Prayer from Bethlehem And Jerusalem

Lord Jesus Christ, born a little child in Bethlehem, forced to flee with a terrified family, we pray for the children of this region, that we leave a legacy of justice with walls and war no more.

In Galilee You calmed a storm, gentling fear and overcoming nature. May the northern Lake and hills know peace again.

Lord of beauty, who brought lushness to Lebanon, where trees stood tall and green, forgive us for scorching earth and flesh, polluting the sea. Help us re-build bridges where people meet and new life blossoms.

In Jerusalem You turned power upside down and overcame death. May the power centres of the world resurrect Your powerlessness and new hope.

Amen.

Jerusalem

I woke up this mornin' and
none of the news was good
And death machines were rumblin'
'cross the ground where Jesus stood
And the man on my TV told me that
it had always been that way
And there was nothin'
anyone could do or say

And I almost listened to him
Yeah, I almost lost my mind
Then I regained my senses again
And looked into my heart to find
That I believe that one fine day
all the children of Abraham
Will lay down their swords
forever in Jerusalem

Written by Steve Earle
Published by Sarangel Music

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Message from the Treasurer

This year's Gift Day falls on Sunday 17th September 2006 and I should like to remind you that the Church can benefit from the recovery of income tax on all amounts donated provided you are a basic rate tax payer.

Basically we can recover 28 pence on every £1 that you donate. If you have not done so previously and would like to help in this manner please complete the Gift Aid form which is enclosed in your Gift Day envelope accompanying the September Newsletter.

At the time of writing the Church faces a heavy financial commitment in renovating the existing Manse ahead of the appointment of a new minister. With this in mind please consider making a regular contribution to Church funds using the Gift Aid scheme.

Please see Robert Allan (Telephone number 01847 892989) or myself (Telephone number 01847 890304) for this purpose.

Stuart Whiteley
Treasurer
August 2006

The Shortened Sermon

It is not a far cry from the "ordinary" to the "special" collection. Some sermons on the latter occasions are extra long; while others, it is but fair to say, are extra short.

It is related of Dean Jonathan Swift that he once preached a charity sermon, the length of which so irritated many of his hearers that they remonstrated with him on the matter.

On a subsequent occasion he preached another sermon of the same kind, and this time many of his hearers thought he was too short -so difficult it is to please everybody.

The Dean's text was longer than his sermon:-" He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will be repaid to him again."

"Now,my friends," continued the preacher, " you hear the terms of the loan. If you like the security, down with the dust."

It is recorded that the collection which followed this quaintest and shortest of sermons was eminently satisfactory.

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



"Just after the second battle of Bull Run, when communication was cut off by the telegraph being down, the people in the South were in a feverish state of anxiety to get news.

At length a letter arrived at the post office in Lexington, the home of Stonewall Jackson, addressed to his old pastor.

It was in the General's handwriting, and all were impatient to have it read, so that they might know how the battle had gone. When the seal was broken only this was found:

` Dear Pastor, I remember that this is the day of the collection for Foreign Missions. Please find enclosed my cheque.-T. J. JACKSON."

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Christine Stonel
P.O. Box 2714
Kathmandu
Nepal

Letter from Nepal

July 2006

Dear Friends,

I'm just back in Nepal, greeted by a 16-hour downpour making paddling knee-deep the only way to my flat, and traffic where cycles, motor-bikes, and cars all drive straight at you, instead of in straight lines. I drove four thousand miles while I was in (mainly) Scotland and it was a great joy to see so many of you, but I was very sorry that there were so many friends and congregations that I just didn't have time to visit. I would have loved to meet everyone but even a month away has meant a big pile-up of training here. I'm missing, but grateful for, all the good things I enjoyed especially time with dear friends. Age now means I am not able to be a World Mission or CMS partner, but I'm back "independently" as it were but with the support of friends and churches. Things for which I have been longing for the last twenty-five years are beginning to happen, and the opportunities for helping are endless, so it isn't the time to leave. Here's my first day back....

At KISC (Kathmandu International Study Centre) it's the last week of term. The teacher training unit now has its own adjacent building and half of all my equipment had been moved in along with a special needs trainer. A Norwegian mission has promised funds for 5 years and a couple in England have been accepted by a mission and will come to KISC as teacher trainers in January. I'll have to have a big final move next week. Then I walked round to Save the Children Norway - it's so near I don't need the bike. Along with Save the Children US and Japan they are now improving/transforming village primary schools from the first grade up in 24 districts, a third of the country. So I must do trainings in Baglung, Rukum, Rolpa, Kabre.... these are the priorities the others a bit later! But even more exciting is that there is now a 'critical mass' of schools where the teaching has changed out of all recognition and the happiness of the children and their understanding and the enthusiasm of teachers and parents are clear to see.

The government and donors WANT good quality education for all but haven't understood that the key is to help the teachers who in general know nothing about how to make school a happy place. So now Save the Children are ready to go to the government with proof that our method is good and to press for it to be done nation-wide with World Bank input. Then think how much training will be needed and how many enthusiastic trainers!! Then via Room to Read to see how Tommy Tempo 2 and 3 and reprints are getting on, I went to see Khus, who publishes my Better English for Schools series. "Didi, five districts ring up every day asking for a training as all the private schools in the district are using our books. Can you start doing them this week?" Well, yes fitting round the ones I've just booked. Now the diary is full for July and still lots to do. It prompted these thoughts... Bhairhawa and Syangja, Rukum and Rolpa Janakpur and Siraha, even distant Dolpa. Dhading, Dang and Pokhara, Kabre and Kailali - Social Studies, English, Maths and even, yes, Nepali! It takes a day or two to reach these places, but I have got one booked for Kathmandu itself. What of the country itself? More peaceful in terms of no strikes, but still a culture of strikes and trouble if you don't like anything. The Maoists and all the political parties are combining to write a quick, temporary constitution as well as actually running the country, and then there will have to be a new constitution. So many different ideals and aims it will be a long and rocky road ahead for a country with so little experience, so continue to pray for moderation, co-operation and development for the many poor.

Thanks for everything, it's great having you all with me. This weeks special Anglican prayer or collect was that all of us in our different callings would be enabled to serve faithfully as Christ's servants. Let's continue to pray for each other like that.

With my love,
Christine

This is my first non-mission letter. If you would to hear my news by e-mail, as some are already, please contact Mrs Shirley McKay: shirleymckay@hotmail.co.uk Any complaints to me though!!!

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Standing on God's Promise

Rees Howells, founder of the Bible College of Wales, spent five years , from 1915 to 1920 in Africa with the South Africa General Mission. About a week before they sailed they received money from the Mission to pay their expenses to London, but they needed some things to complete their outfit, and once again the rule was applied, "First need First claim".

"There is always a tendency to keep money, so as to get out of God's testings," said Mr. Howells, "and we tried our best to do it this time!"

"Anyway, we had to spend the money, and all the people of the place thought we were well supplied. So we were, up to that week, and we thought money would be sure to come the day before we were to leave for London; but the last post came and no money, and our train was leaving before the post next morning. We thought it would be very hard to say good-bye to my uncle and aunt and little Samuel, but the burden for the train money made the parting a little easier! That is often the way with the Lord; when we have a very hard thing to do, He will burden us in another way to make the former one easier."

"Next morning, it was not so hard to part with our parents, because we had to walk to the station without the money! We felt sure that it would come on the station platform, but no, the time came for the train to leave. What were we to do? There was only one thing possible. We still had ten shillings, and we must go as far as we could with it, then our extremity would be God's opportunity. We had to change trains at Llanelly station, about twenty miles from our home, and wait there a couple of hours; so without letting anyone know, we only booked as far as that. There were many people at our home station wishing us all the good things, but what we needed was money to go to London! Many also came as far as Llanelly, singing all the way. The thought that came to me was, 'I'd sing better if I had the money!'"

"We went out to breakfast with some friends at Llanell, and then walked back to the station still not delivered; and now the time for the train had come. The Spirit then spoke to me and said, 'If you had money what would you do?' 'Take my place in the queue at the booking office,' I said. 'Well, are you not preaching that My promises are equal to current coin? You had better take your place in the queue.' So there was nothing I could do except obey. There were about 'dozen people before me. There they were passing by the booking office one by one. The devil kept on telling me, 'Now you have only a few people in front of you, and when your turn comes, you will have to walk through. You have preached much about Moses with ' Red Sea in front and the Egyptians behind; but now you are the one who is shut in.' 'Yes, shut in,' I answered, 'but, like Moses, I'll be gloriously led out!' When there were only two before me, a man stepped out of the crowd and said, 'I'm sorry I can't wait any longer, but I must open my shop.' He said good-bye and put thirty shillings in my hand! It was most glorious and only a foretaste of what the Lord would do in Africa, if we would obey. After I had the tickets, the people who came with us to the train began to give gifts to us, but the Lord had held them back until we had been tested. We were singing all the way to London!"

On their arrival, Mr. Head asked them to breakfast the next morning. He then told them that he had £50 for them, but he didn't post it. "Thank God, you didn't," said Mr. Howells, adding to himself, "I wouldn't have been without the test in the queue for anything."

From "Rees Howells: Intercessor" by Norman Grubb .

Published by The Lutterworth Press PO Box 60 Cambridge CB1 2NT

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In The Hands of a Higher Law

I inherited the tradition of a beach mission (**in Aberdeen -Ed.**) which in Tom Allan's day had seen five hundred gathered on the sands. As the week progressed we found selves in direct competition with the red-coats - an army of youth workers hired by the council to entertain children.

We therefore moved to Hazelhead and Duthie Park, with lunch-time and ening services at St Nicholas' Kirkyard in Union Street. The Kirk-yard was the ideal preaching station. Standing on a gravestone and singing 'Up From the Grave He Arose', or borrowing a set of bones from a passer-by and using them to illustrate a sermon from Ezekiel 36 - 'Can these bones live?' - were unforgettable experiences.

One night the evening service had just started when a commotion, indeed an uproar, started in Union Street. A man was shouting, with the high-pitched hysterical voice of one under the influence of demons. "Don't listen, don't believe him! God is evil! Satan is good!" He had, inevitably, drawn a considerable crowd around him, and advanced purposely to where I was standing and preaching.

I have always had an immense and unreasonable dread of any hysterical crowd, and my knees were knocking in terror as I retreated to the end of the microphone lead and looked around for support, only to find that the team had retreated a further twenty yards, with their backs to the wall.

I continued, however, to preach as the man advanced with red, glaring eyes and tried to seize the microphone from my hand. In terror I watched as his hand, some eighteen inches from my own, was apparently gripped by an immense and unseen force. His hand quivered but was held. Shaking with fear, my voice went deep and quiet as I continued to speak of the love and power of the crucified Christ.

After ten minutes the man went quietly to a gravestone and started sobbing. The crowd were deeply silent, and a policeman came up and asked if help were required, but by that time the situation was clearly in the hands of a higher law. Later I was approached by two young Americans - whose typical response was, 'Man, that was beautiful!'

From "Mussels at Midnight", the autobiography of Captain. Stephen Anderson, the Church of Scotland's first lay Evangelist, published 1989 by Christian Focus Publications, Tain. Copyright Stephen Anderson.

The Faith That Moves The Mountains

When you know not where to turn, stay still, just where you are.

There is something yet to learn. Be careful lest you jar the threads that
fate is weaving in a pattern you can't see. Be Passive.

Trust the Hand that works the looms of destiny. Though it is your wish
to set things right and put things straight, Choose the wiser way. Have faith.

With patience watch and wait. There's a purpose in it all, as time will surely prove

And when you least expect it , you will see the mountain move.

by Patience Strong

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He Sets The Prisoner Free! : The Testimony of Brother Musheng

I was privileged to witness Brother Yun escape from prison in 1997, by the hand of the Lord. I had been called to work in the prison yard at seven o'clock that morning. As I walked back to my cell, escorted by a guard, we stopped to be let through an iron security gate. I couldn't believe it when I saw Yun walking out! We all knew that he was crippled, so to say I was surprised to see him walking is a great understatement! He walked right past me, but the guard with me didn't see him at all.

It wasn't until I returned to my cell that I realized I hadn't seen Yun walk since his legs were broken. I was one of three men who carried him around the prison. The guards even called him "the cripple". His legs were completely bruised from all the beatings he'd been given. He couldn't do anything for himself because of his sorry condition. We even had to wash his clothes for him.

It dawned on me that Yun was trying to escape. I immediately fell to my knees and begged God to save his life as I thought the guards had purposely let him out into the prison yard so they could shoot him. I climbed to the cell window and watched him cross the yard and disappear through the gate. There were probably thirty prison guards in the yard at the time, but no one noticed Yun escape! He even walked right past several of them.

A short time later a great rainstorm came. Back on the third floor of the prison, the guard noticed Yun was missing just a few minutes after his escape. He searched everywhere, calling out "Cripple, where are you?" To start with the guard was quite relaxed, but as the number of places Yun could have been hiding diminished he grew more and more anxious. After about five minutes he raised the alarm and the whole prison was in an uproar over Yun's escape. The prison authorities interrogated us but we truthfully told them we hadn't helped Yun in any way. Two of the guards lost their jobs.

This extract is taken from "THE HEAVENLY MAN" , the story of Brother Yun,
Published by Monarch Books . Copyright Brother Yun and Paul Hattaway.

FAITH is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Heb 11:1)

Jesus said, "Have **FAITH** in God"

Mark 11:22

Lord, Increase our **FAITH**

Luke 17:5

Being justified by **FAITH**, we have peace
with God

Rom 5:1

Walk by **FAITH** not by sight

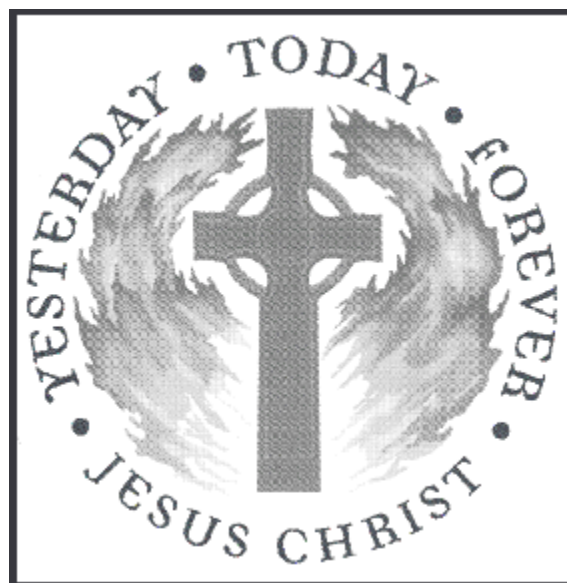
2 Cor 5:7

The fruit of the Spirit is **FAITH**

Gal 5:22

Without **FAITH** it is impossible to please God

Heb 11:1



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Exploits

The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Dan. 11:32).

Norman MacLeod (1780- 1866), born in Stoer, Assynt was one of most remarkable religious leaders of his generation. With a group of about 150 followers, he left Scotland for Cape Breton in 1817 before moving on to Australia in 1851 before finally settling in Waipu, in New Zealand's North Island in 1854, by this time leader a community of more than eight hundred men women and children, largely of Highland origin.

The community thus formed included a number of men who made a name for themselves as seafarers of the first order .

The following extract is from "The Lion of Scotland" by Neil Robinson © 1974, which tells their story

"There was a Colin MacDonald, for example, who came down from the Northern Wairoa River with a load of timber for Australia. He reached the bar at the entrance to the Kaipara - a graveyard of ships - and discovered six other vessels waiting inside. The signal was showing that the bar was considered unworkable, but Colin took his ship out.

When he returned to the Kaipara about a fortnight later with a load of coal, the signal was again adverse. He sailed in and found the six ships still waiting for the bar to become favourable."

Though I Feel Afraid

Though I feel afraid of territory unknown
I know that I can say
That I do not stand alone
For Jesus You have promised
Your presence in my heart
I cannot see the ending but
It's here that I must start

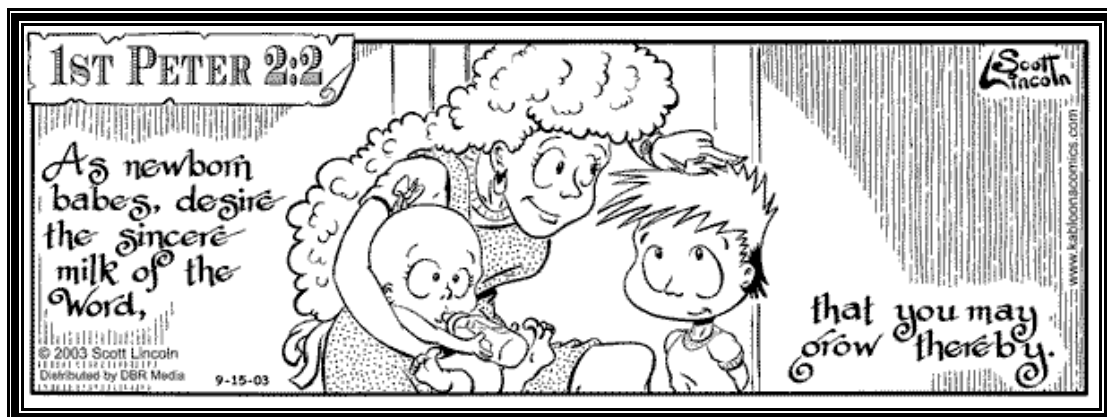
And all I know is You have called me
And that I will follow Is all I can say
I will go where You will send me
And Your fire lights my way

What lies across the waves
May cause my heart to fear
Will I survive the day,
Must I leave what's known and dear?

A ship that's in the harbour
Is still and safe from harm
But it was not built to be there,
It was made for wind and storm."

And all I know is You have called me
And that I will follow Is all I can say
I will go where You will send me
And Your fire lights my way

Words: Iain White © Little Misty Music



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GUILD NEWS

The official launch of the Guild's projects for the next three years, under the title "Let's Live: body, mind and soul" will take place on 2nd September, at the Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow when representatives of our Guild will be attending.

The theme for this year is "Honouring the Body." This is indeed important in our walk as Guild members and we are praying for guidance and support from God, and all who will remember us in prayer.

Our session begins on Monday 11th September when we will gather together at the Royal Hotel for our annual meal, before going to the Hall for 7:30 pm where our guests will be our locum minister, Rev. Doug Anderson and his wife Beryl.

Challenge, Fellowship and Fun are all to be found in the Guild's programme and new members and visitors are always welcome, so why not COME AND SEE.

Every blessing from the Guild,

Mary Chalmers

Contact person
Tel 01847 892883

Autumn Rally	4th Oct.
Venue to be confirmed	
Coffee Morning	21st Oct.
British Legion	
Guild Week Coffee Morning	17th Nov.
British Legion	

Church Officer

In June, we were sorry to learn that Bob Chalmers had decided to stand down from the post of Church Officer, having served in that capacity for over twenty five years.

Bob has been faithful and diligent in carrying out the many duties involved, and never stopped at the words in the job description but acted above and beyond the call of duty.

To many people the Church Officer is, alongside the Minister, the face of the church, whether in dealing with weddings, funerals and other special services, or giving access to tradesmen, or liaising with other groups who use the premises. At all such times, Bob consistently showed the compassion and gentleness of the Saviour Jesus Christ.

We hope that Bob will enjoy being able to take a well-earned break and will be refreshed in his "retirement" and welcome Alec Stevens as our new Church Officer. We pray that he will find the work enjoyable and rewarding.

The Minister's Man

The minister's man stood apart from his fellows: as a child, the schoolmaster could not train him for the place he was to occupy. As a young man, the University could not mould him, even if it had got the opportunity. Ministers and schoolmasters might be turned out by the dozen; but a beadle, or minister's man, was a totally different story.

James Dawson, a well-known beadle in Greyfriars Church, Glasgow, one day came upon three elders of a neighbouring church in solemn conclave at a street corner.

The subject under discussion was the election of a new beadle; and, seeing James pass, they hailed him, and asked him if he could recommend any one for the vacancy.

Reflecting for a moment, James shook his head and replied, "Gin it had been a bit minister or elder body ye wanted I could hae named a score or two, but whaur to get a beadle is mair than I can tell."

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