

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 : 2008

Spring 2008



MINISTER'S LETTER

**Pulteneytown Manse
2 Coronation St.
Wick
KW1 5LS**

01955 603166

Dear Friends,

Emma was an attractive, bouncy, four year old. When she first came to Sunday Club she asked one of the Elders, 'Will you be my Daddy. I don't have a Daddy.' Her big brother had a Daddy though they didn't live with him.

They were brought up by an elderly relative as their mother had a drink problem and couldn't be trusted to look after them. Then the elderly relative died. Their mother vowed to try harder and was given custody but it was soon apparent that the children were at risk... and they had to be taken away and sent to another part of the country. Life is desperately hard for some young people now-a-days and as human beings we cannot but be moved by such lack of parental care.

We were greatly moved by the testimony of the children from the Watoto African choir. All were orphans but were now lovingly cared for by Christians at the orphanages. In many ways they were fortunate.

It is probably no exaggeration to say most children in our communities are spiritual orphans. They have no one who prays for them. No parents or grandparents who are in any way concerned for their spiritual well-being.

That is a tremendous challenge for us. The young people who come to our various church activities often fall in to the category of having no relatives who care for them spiritually. We need Christians who will focus their prayers on particular areas in our community and on particular children and young people.

Operation Mobilisation is one of the great evangelistic movements in recent times. It came about after some elderly ladies started praying for their local High School. One of the pupils, George Verwer, was converted and was then led to found this great movement.

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movement that has mobilised tens of thousands of young people in missions across Europe and now has ships that go to ports around the world with educational and evangelistic literature.

"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

Yours sincerely,

Bill Wallace

FUNERALS

Molly Ross, Pennyland Drive, Thurso

Jack Budge, Bayview Nursing Home

Donald Bruce, Mackay Court, Thurso

We extend our sympathy to those who have been bereaved and pray that the and peace of Jesus Christ would be their strength at this time.

Help build a Watoto House?

There may be opportunity to help build a house in Uganda for some of the Watoto orphans.

If there is sufficient interest a team from Caithness may go next year.

The group would go for two weeks which would include some sight-seeing in Uganda.

Those going would need to pay for their own travel etc. and raise some sponsorship money.

If anyone is interested they should get in touch with Bill Wallace 0195560316



A PRAYER OF JOHN CALVIN

"Save us, Lord from being self-centred in our prayers, and teach us to remember to pray for others. May we be so caught up in love for those for whom we pray, that we may feel their needs as keenly as our own, and pray for them with imagination, sensitivity, and knowledge."



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LETTER FROM NEPAL

P.O.Box 2714

Kathmandu

Nepal

January 2008



Dear Friends,

In my last letter I left you with KISC needing somewhere to go. God found a place for us about 5 minutes away. It was a carpet factory so it had a 4 floor building (no rooms, just empty space) and in the compound 2 houses and space to build a big hall. At the end of term was the big move and everything was put in roughly the right area according to our plan. The only room ready was mine and I settled in. Teacher training has one of the houses at the back. I get plenty of exercise carrying my training boxes to the gate and back! Then the workmen moved in. All the classrooms to be partitioned off, windows knocked out, toilets installed, computer cables put in, water tanks and pipes, carpeting in some rooms, painting, building the hall. Yet a month later we plan to start term on time on Jan 14. That is 5 days away and it doesn't seem very ready, but the primary teachers are unpacking and getting rooms set up and secondary teachers can soon start, and I'm sure it will be a good start. The main problem is the lack of play and PE space. There isn't anywhere at all though we could make a basket ball court on the big roof. We are trying to rent 2 neighbouring houses with big gardens but neither are vacant just now.

I used the holidays in doing further afield and longer away trainings, adding to my projected Rough Guide To Non-tourist Hotels of Nepal! These days the main roads are blocked not only by political factions but by gangs demanding money for road accidents. I was stopped for a whole day (and then had to find a hotel for the night) but I was on the way home so it didn't matter. And then stopped again at 7 o'clock at night. We quickly turned round and found a hotel of sorts and next morning got through early to start the training at 7.30am. Other stops for roads partly blocked for crashed vehicles were short and so I did all the training and travelling safely. At one training the teachers were unusually good and I found they had been taught by someone on my first 9 month government training 13 years ago. We only did 2 that long. He was so pleased to meet me again and remembered everything we had done and used it, so it was a refreshment to my spirits.

Now I turn to A level history, to writing some children's stories, to a lot of work to get material and teacher training for One Laptop per Child.(we are world pioneers in making tailor made national curriculum material) and the never ending trainings and school -helping. Save the Children want to improve the way they are changing village schools....it is very good but now is a chance to suggest new ideas. So things are happening! Nepal is a sort of republic with no president and no real government and simmering violence. Elections, postponed twice, may happen in April, but most people think not!

May you know God's presence and joy this coming year. I liked a former Archbishop's advice, "Don't take care, take risks"

With my love

Christine

Christine Stone (MBE) has been in Nepal for the last 24 years and is currently the head of the K.I.S.C. Teacher Training Programme based in Kathmandu.

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NOTICES

Readings from Mark 16

SPRING
COMMUNION

Sunday March 9th 11:30 a.m.

Summer : June 8th

Autumn : September 7th

Winter : December 7th

On Preparation for Communion

THE DISCIPLE:

Lord, when I consider Your dignity and my own wretchedness, I am full of fear and confusion. For if I do not receive You, I refuse life; and if I intrude myself unworthily, I incur Your displeasure.

What, then, shall I do, my God, my Helper, my Counsellor in need? Show me the right way, and set before me some short exercise, suitable for Holy Communion.

I must learn to prepare my heart for You devoutly and reverently, both for the fruitful receiving of Your Sacrament, and for the right offering of so august and divine a Sacrifice.

from "The Imitation of Christ"
by Thomas a Kempis.

Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb

And they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned

After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God

(New International Version)

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

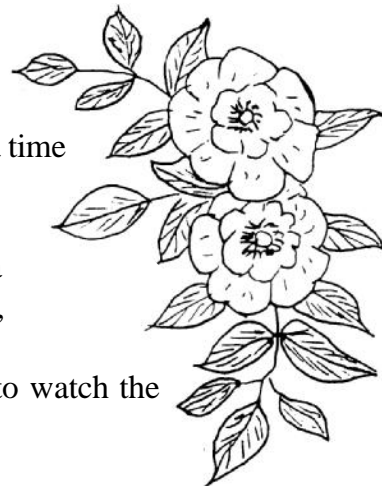
Ecclesiastes 3:1 (King James Version)

There's a time for work and a time for talk

And time for a seat in the sun,

Aye its good to watch the world go by,

When all your work is done.



David Hope

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The House of Glory

The dedication of Solomon's temple offers us a picture of what God is seeking in the church. The temple was built, and in great pageantry and celebration, it was consecrated to the Lord. Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. Then, immediately after the king prayed, for the first time in over 400 years, the glory of God was manifested in full view of the people. We read, "Fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house" (2 Chron. 7:1).

If the Lord would honour the dedication of the physical temple with a visible manifestation of His glory, how much more does He seek to reveal His glorious presence in His living temple, the church?

But there were prerequisites that occurred prior to this appearance of the Lord. First, it was not until Solomon's temple was actually built, with all its separate aspects connected together and covered in gold, that the glory of the Lord appeared. Likewise, we also must be built together and "perfected in unity" if we would see the fullness of the Lord displayed among us and the world believe in Christ (John 17:23). There is no other aspect of life more glorious or wonderful than this.

The next requirement deals with our worship. The Lord was not revealed until the singers, trumpeters and priests lifted their voices in praise and worship to God. We cannot overstate the need to be worshipers of God.

Even now, in a number of church worship services, a faint, luminous glory is appearing, like a living cloud, drawn by the purity of the ascending worship.

However, there was another dimension of preparation which also preceded the revelation of glory. This prerequisite had to do with those in leadership. "And when the priests came forth from the holy place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without regard to divisions)...then the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God" (2 Chron. 5:11-14).

Their divisions in the priesthood had been ordained by God according to individual families and unique purposes. These were not carnal divisions, born of jealousy or strife, but divisions of purpose, function and timing. Yet, when the priests entered the holy place, God required they "sanctified themselves without regard to divisions" (vs 11). In other words, when it came to building the temple and entering the holy place, the priests had to lower the priority of individual service, which in a sense divided them, and raise the priority of seeking God's glory, which united them. It was here, when they were "without . . . divisions" that the glory of God manifested.

So also today, God has appointed churches in each city with different functions, graces and talents, all of which are needed to meet the needs of a diverse surrounding culture. These differences, however, are not meant to divide us, but to complete us. But if we desire to see the glory of God return to the church, the divisions of purpose must be subordinate to the unity of Spirit.

Today, in meetings, conferences and prayer groups, in one-on-one visits over coffee, and in church altars and citywide outreaches, increasing numbers of Christians are returning to Christ "without regard to divisions."

Indeed, over the last years, tens of thousands of God-hungry pastors are surrendering to God in fresh acts of holy consecration; they are seeking the glory of God. The outcome? The church is being "fitted together...growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom [we] also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:21-22).

Notice these words: "fitted together...built together." The true house of the Lord is revealed when the church, "without regard to divisions" is "fitted together." Only then can the church truly be unveiled as the temple of the Lord, "a dwelling of God in the Spirit."

"And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into a unit" (John 17:22-23 margin).

Jesus is not coming to give us a new form of church government or new doctrines and programs. He is coming to be glorified in His saints and marveled at by all who have believed! (2 Thess. 1:10). It was for this that He called us; that we may gain His glory! (2 Thess. 2:14).

Let us each see that God is building something in this hour that will far exceed our current definition of the church. God is building us together into "a holy temple in the Lord," a place where His very glory shall be revealed!

Consider the words of the following prayer. It is our response to the Lord's call to build His house. God is calling us, not to lose our individual distinctions and callings, but to build something that fits us together, enabling us to build without regard to divisions. If you see the vision of the house of the Lord, please pray with us...

Lord Jesus, I thank You for granting me a new opportunity to serve You. I repent of the areas in my heart where I allowed division and self-interest to guide my actions. Jesus, I want to see Your glory, even to abide as did Moses, in Your sacred presence. Master, I consecrate my heart without regard to divisions, to Your sacred service. Before You I sanctify my life and my church to build the house of the Lord in my city. Amen.

Francis Frangipane

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See What a Morning That Blessed Hope

by Keith Getty & Stuart Townend

Thy brother shall rise again. Jn 11:23

SEE what a morning gloriously bright,
With the dawning of hope in Jerusalem;
Folded the grave-clothes,
Tomb filled with light,
As the angels announce Christ is risen!

See God's salvation plan, wrought in love,
Borne in pain, paid in sacrifice,
Fulfilled in Christ, the Man, for He lives:
Christ is risen from the dead!

See Mary weeping, 'Where is He laid?'
As in sorrow she turns from the
empty tomb;
Hears a voice speaking, calling
her name;
It's the Master,
the Lord raised to life again!

The voice that spans the years,
Speaking life, stirring hope,
Bringing peace to us,
Will sound till He appears,
For He lives,
Christ is risen from the dead!

One with the Father, Ancient of Days,
Through the Spirit
Who clothes faith with certainty,
Honour and blessing, glory and praise
To the King crowned
With power and authority!

And we are raised with Him,
Death is dead, love has won,
Christ has conquered;
And we shall reign with Him, For He lives,
Christ is risen from the dead!

This was the blessed comfort which Jesus gave to Martha in answer to her cry of sorrow, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." There was in her plaint, a hint of blaming the Lord for the delay in His coming when He first heard the news of Lazarus' illness (John 11:6). But Jesus ignores the suggestion and answers, "Thy brother shall live again." Look Martha, not to the past - look ahead, for the past is gone and holds only memories. Surely there are precious memories, but they are made real in the hope of meeting again, Memory does have comfort for those whose loved ones have passed on.

Yet memory is not an unmixed comfort. There are thorns among their flowers:

"For sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things."

*Beyond all question,
The mystery of godliness is great:
He appeared in a body,
Was vindicated by the Spirit,
Was seen by angels,
Was preached among the nations,
Was believed on in the world,
Was taken up in glory.*

1 Tim 3:16

True joy and settled peace cannot exist on memories alone: For that look to the future. Hope of the future relieves the pang of the past. It tells of the reunion, the partingless meeting.

It leaps over the years of waiting, the valleys of loneliness, and drives the shadows of today away by the light of the promise of hope. Have you recently lost loved ones? Is your heart sad? Are prone to be morbid and confused as you engage only in memories? Then listen! Don't seek the living among the dead. Remember Jesus' words. He shall live again. Don't be like the wife who spent hours each day in a seat by the grave of her husband weeping and sobbing over memories.

It is well to show our affection and love, but to that wife we would say, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" Rather, be like the dear old widowed lady who looked up from her Bible and smiling brightly said, "I was just reading and rejoicing in His promise, that those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him - for my John will be there. Oh happy day!"

"Bread for Each Day" by DeHaan & Bosch

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Lord sweep o'er our country



Lord sweep o'er our country like a long forgotten melody
Let hearts once turned to stone now awake to joy again
Thunder in the islands and a fire in the wilderness
Lord, let this nation sing again.

Let us sing, from the islands to the coast land shores
In the heights and in the valley floors let this nation sing again
Let us sing, from the moorland to the shining peak
Where the river runs and mountains sleep
Lord, let this nation sing again.

Scottish Paraphrases 24

Lord, in mercy, look on Scotland

Ye heavens send forth your song of praise!
earth, raise your voice below!
Let hills and mountains join the hymn,
and joy through nature flow.

Behold how gracious is our God!
hear the consoling strains,
In which he cheers our drooping hearts,
and mitigates our pains.

Cease ye, when days of darkness come,
in sad dismay to mourn,
As if the Lord could leave his saints
forsaken or forlorn.

Can the fond mother e'er forget
the infant whom she bore?
And can its plaintive cries be heard,
nor move compassion more?

She may forget: nature may fail
a parents heart to move;
But Sion on my heart shall dwell
in everlasting love.

Full in my sight, upon my hands
I have engraved her name:
My hands shall build her ruined walls,
and raise her broken frame.

Isaiah 49:13-17

Lord, in mercy, look on Scotland
See the scattered bones of martyrs
Hear again the prayers they offered
For the land in which they suffered

Generations now forgotten
Saw your splendour, felt your power
Fed upon the bread of heaven
Drank from springs of Life Eternal

Sinners wept with deep conviction
As the Spirit moved among them
Strong men bowed the knee before you
Hearts of flint by Grace were broken

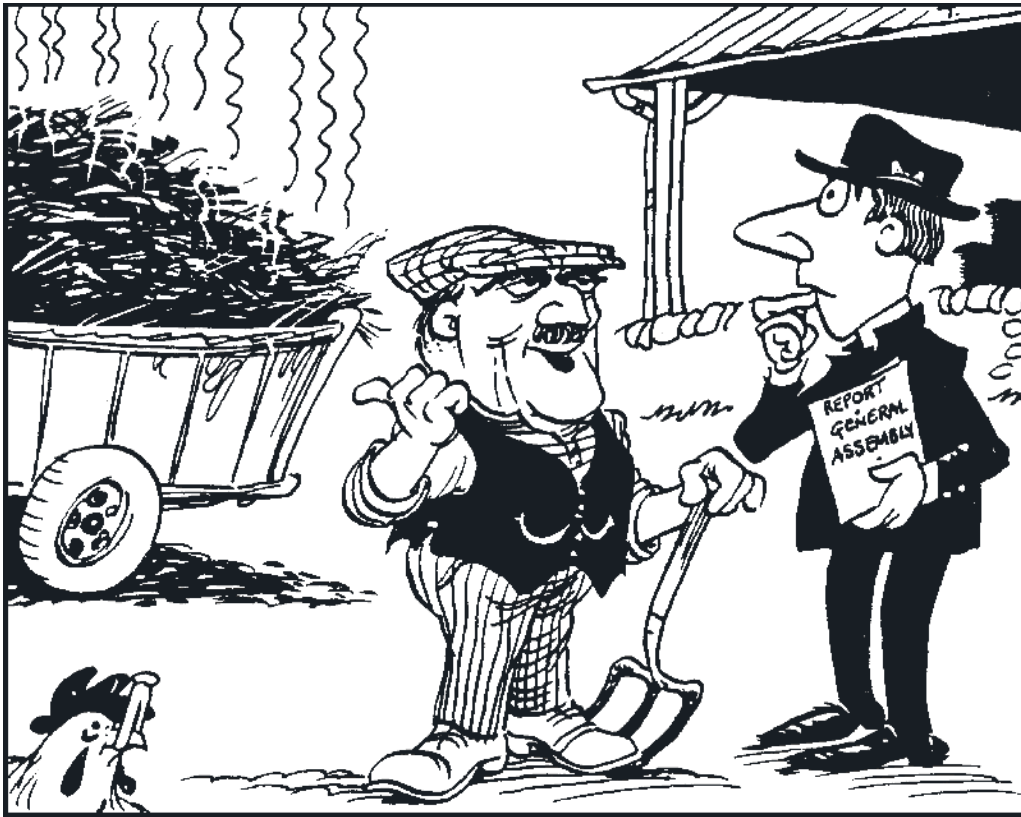
Hillsides rang with holy laughter
City streets were filled with singing
Villages and lonely hamlets
Shone with light that came from glory

Christ exalted in a nation
Pardoned sin and banished darkness
Send another Great Awakening
Give us Scotland or we perish

Rev. Alex Muir



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



A Highland farmer who had attended for the first time the General Assembly, that annual gathering of Church of Scotland ministers in Edinburgh, was asked on his return home for his impressions.

After giving the matter due thought, he replied 'Ministers are rather like dung. They are all right when spread thinly over the land, but get them in a heap and they are nauseous!'

From "Holy Wit" by Rev. James A. Simpson.



"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world"

(John 16:33).

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Government plans to spend £100 million over the next five years helping poorer countries deal with the impact of global warming is a welcome acknowledgement of the 'carbon debt' industrialised countries owe the developing world, says international development agency Christian Aid.

It is particularly pleased that in announcing the funding today, International Development Secretary Douglas Alexander highlighted the right of poorer countries to continue to develop economically. It warns, however, that the funding must be additional to money pledged to the developing world as aid which has yet to be delivered in full.

Christian Aid believes that it is crucial that rich countries responsible for most carbon pollution assist poorer nations already bearing the brunt of climate change through extreme climate conditions. The money is needed to help them cope with the impact of global warming, and encourage cuts in greenhouse gas emissions without depriving them of the chance of creating jobs and better lives for their people.

Christian Aid senior climate change policy analyst Andrew Pendleton said: 'The countries that have done the least to cause climate change are the ones that are suffering most from its effects. 'To keep temperature rises worldwide below 2°C and avoid widespread climate catastrophe, massive cuts in greenhouse gas emissions are needed both in industrialised countries, and the developing world.

'If richer countries are unwilling to help developing countries meet the costs involved, poorer countries will have little incentive to play their part. Instead, they will be able to say with a great deal of justification that they are being asked to forego future development to solve a problem not of their making. 'We have to help them manage the impact of climate change while still providing jobs and an improved quality of life for their people without further adding to carbon emissions.

The climate change funding will be spent on researching the impact of global warming on poor and vulnerable communities, and the best ways for individuals, governments and the private sector to prepare for the future. It is not clear at this stage how this will be done and whether institutions and organisations in the developing world will benefit.

'If this funding is about flying in expensive consultants from rich countries to tell poor people how to respond and then flying them out again taking most of their knowledge with them, it will be ineffective' said Andrew Pendleton. A climate change centre will also be established to provide developing countries with the expertise to understand and work with the physical, social and economic impacts of climate change.

In announcing the funding Douglas Alexander said: 'Climate change is a defining global social justice issue. If we fail to tackle climate change we risk condemning the world's poorest people to poverty for generations to come. 'At the same time, we must not allow the climate change debate to neglect - or even prevent - the right of developing countries to grow. Development and climate change are - and must be seen as - inextricably linked.'

Christian Aid Week 2008

11- 17 May 2008

Can you help?

If you would like to help with door-to-door collecting during this year's Christian Aid Week. or if you would like to become more involved in the the work of Christian Aid, please contact Iain or Maureen MacKillop **Tel: 01847 892519** (Collectors must be at least 16 years old)

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GUILD NEWS



The management team apologise for the omission of our contribution to the last newsletter. We were experiencing some changes at the time. Margaret Stephen had just taken over as Contact person, when she left for 3 months holiday in Australia.

However it was Wilma's untimely death which affected us most. We still miss her a lot, and she was deeply committed to the Guild projects.

The meeting with guest speaker Anne Dunnett, Lord-Lieutenant of Caithness, followed soon afterwards. She knew Wilma well & spoke very highly of her. Anne then gave a most interesting & enlightening talk about her role as Lord-Lieutenant. The office is certainly no sinecure. She is a lady of many hats, literally as well as figuratively!

November saw a night of 'Fun & Games' with quizzes to keep us on our toes, & scratching our heads!

This was followed by Guild Week which began with a coffee morning & culminated in a Church service conducted by Guild members. We welcomed the opportunity to bring the attention of the congregation to some of the Guild activities.

On Scots night we were delightfully entertained by Chris & Peter Nicol on accordion & guitar & Mina Mackay's dancers, always a pleasure to watch.

The United Guilds' Dinner on 3rd December, & hosted by Scrabster Mission was well attended and enjoyed by all.

The management team arranged an impromptu Christmas party on Dec 17th when our guests for that night had to pull out at the last minute. The Christmas goodies went down well!

The New Year got off to a good start with a most informative talk by Police Inspector Liz Goskirk. She succeeded in making us feel that Thurso is a pretty safe place to live in on the whole!

Our next meeting brought a touch of nostalgia to several members, when Ricky Mackay showed part of his collection of slides of Old Thurso. The styles have certainly changed a bit since then!

A good turnout of members & guests welcomed the Salvation Army on Feb.3rd With a selection of music & poetry together with a 'Fashion Show' it was an excellent evening's entertainment, thoroughly enjoyed by all present.

We are well through the session now, & our thanks go to the Lord for guiding us in all that has been said & done during this time.

The World Day of Prayer will be held in St Peter's & the Holy Rood on Friday, 7th March & all are welcome.

Guild Management Team
p.p. Margaret Stephen (Contact Person)
Tel: 01847894873

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.