

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2 : 2008

Summer 2008



MINISTER'S LETTER

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

01955 603166

Dear Friends,

Three and a half years ago I met your office-bearers and said that I was glad to be your Interim Moderator and that I hope the stay would be short and sweet. It has certainly been sweet but much longer than any of us would have liked.

At a personal level I have to say that although I have not been able to do as much within the congregation as I would have liked it has been a thoroughly enjoyable experience for me. You have a very good team of office-bearers and it has been a joy to work with them.

There is, naturally, considerable disappointment that no Minister has yet been called to the charge. It is, of course, well documented that there is a considerable shortage of Ministers throughout Scotland and that the situation in the north has become acute.

The situation has been like this in the past and it is recorded that in 1695 the Assembly 'ordered' 42 Ministers to go to the Highlands for three months and if they were welcomed by the local congregations 22 of them would have to stay. Any Minister who refused to go without good reason was disciplined.

We live in more enlightened times when Church Courts and Committees do not have these powers. However, in the meantime, the problem remains unsolved. There is, to be sure, an encouraging awareness throughout the Kirk that the problem in the far north is serious.

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Your Nominating Committee will continue to work tirelessly to seek out someone of the Lord's choosing for the congregation. Our Lord's command is to all of us 'Pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into the harvest fields.'

Finally, and most sincerely, thank you all for the rich fellowship which you have shared with me. It has been a great joy to me and I will treasure it for many years to come.

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Bill Wallace

COMMUNION DATES

SUNDAY

8 Jun. 2008

11.30 am

SUNDAY

14 Sep. 2008

11.30 am

SUNDAY

14 Dec. 2008

11.30 am



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Church Coffee Morning
Saturday 20th June
10.00 am -12.00 am
at the Royal British Legion



Donations for the Baking Stall would be gratefully accepted



Church Coffee Morning
Saturday 20th September
10.00 am -12.00 am
at the Royal British Legion

Donations for the Baking and Produce Stalls would be gratefully accepted



CHILDREN'S CORNER

The following Wordsearch is taken from Day One Publications booklet: "Biblical Hidden Words" through the Old Testament. Every word, name or title can be found printed either forwards, backwards, upwards, downwards or diagonally, but always in a straight line. Some words may overlap and letters may be used more than once.



PSALMS / PROVERBS

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|---------------|
| BIT | INSTRUMENT | SAND |
| BRIDLE | JOYFUL | SHEPHERD |
| CEDAR | KNOWLEDGE | SHIELD |
| DAYS | MAJESTY | SNOW |
| ENEMY | MEDITATION | SOLOMON |
| EXALT | PALM | SON |
| EYES | PATHS | SPARROW |
| FOOL | PRAISE | TEACH |
| FOUNDATIONS | PRAYER | TESTIMONY |
| HARP | PSALMS | TRUST |
| HART | RIGHTEOUS | UNDERSTANDING |
| HYSSOP | ROCK | WAIT |
| INSTRUCTION | SAFETY | WISDOM |

Y	U	E	Y	E	S	P	A	R	R	O	W	L	N	N	P
M	I	N	S	T	R	U	C	T	I	O	N	H	O	L	S
G	R	P	D	A	A	I	S	N	N	R	C	S	M	E	A
Y	A	O	I	E	F	U	G	S	A	A	K	E	O	L	L
N	D	S	T	P	R	E	T	H	E	J	D	C	L	D	M
O	E	S	L	T	A	S	T	T	T	I	E	O	O	I	S
M	C	Y	A	H	H	T	T	Y	T	E	O	S	S	R	D
I	L	H	X	I	A	L	H	A	H	F	O	A	T	B	R
T	T	N	E	M	U	R	T	S	N	I	N	U	I	Y	E
S	M	L	S	F	K	I	P	E	H	D	R	T	S	V	H
E	D	L	Y	F	O	U	N	D	A	T	I	O	N	S	P
T	Z	O	A	N	W	E	C	T	R	A	H	N	I	F	E
I	J	B	D	P	N	K	N	O	W	L	E	D	G	E	H
F	P	R	A	Y	E	R	B	J	M	O	D	S	I	W	S

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

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE KIRK SESSION

The responsibilities of the Kirk Session, in general, are: -

- (a) concern for the spiritual welfare not just of the congregation but also of the parish as a whole;
- (b) the provision of Services;
- (c) concern for the organisational life of the congregation.

Among the duties of a Kirk Session are the need to -

- (d) maintain good order;
- (e) administer discipline;
- (f) judge and determine cases;
- (g) see that Assembly legislation is observed;

The Kirk Session is also to -

- (h) judge the fitness of those who desire to receive the Sacraments;
- (i) maintain both a Baptismal Roll and a Communion Roll;
- (j) appoint the Organist, the Church Officer, and one of its number to represent it in Presbytery.

The responsibilities of the Kirk Session to its parish have become increasingly difficult to discharge. The third of the Articles Declaratory may state that "as a National Church [the Church of Scotland] acknowledges its distinctive call and duty to bring the ordinances of religion to the people in every parish in Scotland through a territorial ministry", but, as Dr. Andrew Herron observes in his "A Guide to Congregational Affairs". "in practice to-day the Session has little opportunity of extending this care beyond the actual members of the congregation and their families. The break-up of the traditional parish, the growth of denominations, the increase of those not interested even nominally in the church, have all played a part in making it difficult for the Session to exercise that degree of spiritual oversight that traditionally and constitutionally is its duty." Ministers continue, however, to be approached by parishioners for their services particularly for funerals, weddings, and baptisms.

The Kirk Session has ultimate responsibility for the establishment and the control of every branch of a congregation's activity. All organisations within a congregation are under the supervision of the Kirk Session, even those that have their own central or national organisational framework like the Boys' Brigade and the Guild. The Kirk Session has a particular responsibility for the Sunday School because of its concern for the care of the young. The minister, however, is head of the Sunday School even where, as is generally the case, someone else acts as Superintendent. The appointment of Sunday School teachers (who if possible should be members of the Church) should be with the concurrence of the Kirk Session as well as of the minister.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

The Kirk Session is responsible for calling meetings of the congregation "for ecclesiastical purposes". These deal with all matters other than those having to do with the ordinary finances of the congregation and the care and maintenance of its properties (which are meetings called "for temporal purposes"). For example, meetings in connection with the appointment of a Nominating Committee or the appointment of elders fall into this category as well as those to consider major items of property expenditure as, for example, substantial alterations to church, hall, manse or organ.

A meeting called to establish a Congregational Board is also a meeting "for ecclesiastical purposes" and is therefore called by the Kirk Session. Generally, two Sundays' notice should be given. Only those present who have the right to vote may vote at congregational meetings irrespective of the business under consideration. The rules that apply to the chairing of Kirk Session meetings also apply to the chairing of congregational meetings chaired by the minister.

Abridged Extract from AN INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND by A. GORDON MCGILLIVRAY (2nd EDITION (2001) 2006

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

"Something like Preaching"

Dr. Kidston enjoyed the reputation of being "a hard hitter," and he was worthy of the Reputation, as may be gathered from the following dialogue:-

"How did he get on the day?" an auld wife was asked on her way home by one who had not been able to be at church that morning.

"How did he get on? He just stood and threw stanes at us, an' never missed wi' ane o' them. My certie, but yon was preaching!"

Another description of "something like preaching" is contained in the enthusiastic language of a farmer's wife. "Man, John, yon was something for a body to bring away: nine heads, an' twenty particulars to ilka head! An' sic mouthfu's o' gran' words! Oh man, John, but it was gran', and would do us a' muckle guid if we could mind anything o' it."

The Kirk and Its Worthies

by **Nicholas Dickson**

Future Minister

After church on Sunday morning, a young boy suddenly announced to his mother, "Mom, I've decided I'm going to be a minister when I grow up."

"That's okay with us," the mother said, "But what made you decide to be a minister?"

"Well," the boy replied, "I'll have to go to church on Sunday anyway, and I figure it will be more fun to stand up and yell than to sit still and listen."

Challenges

"Self-acceptance comes from meeting life's challenges vigorously. Don't numb yourself to your trials and difficulties, nor build mental walls to exclude pain from your life. You will find peace not by trying to escape your problems, but by confronting them courageously. You will find peace not in denial, but in victory."

J. Donald Walters

"Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew. They're what make the instrument stretch - what makes you go beyond the norm."

Cicely Tyson

"When we long for life without difficulties, remind us that oaks grow strong in contrary winds and diamonds are made under pressure."

Peter Marshall

Some People

Some people are like wheelbarrows - no use unless pushed.

Some people are like canoes - they drift around unless paddled.

Some people are like kites - they fly away if you don't keep them on a string.

Some people are like tennis balls - you just can't tell which way they'll bounce next.

Some people are like balloons - full of the wind of their own importance, and ready to burst.

Some people are like good watches - open-faced, quietly busy, wholly dependable, always at hand, and full of good works.

The question is - Which are you?

"The Friendship Book of Francis Gay"
1963

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When Average Men Follow Christ

Before we doubt whether we are the calibre of the first disciples, here is a fact sheet compiled from over 200 New Testament Scriptures concerning those whom Jesus first called.

THE DISCIPLES... came to Christ, believed in Him, followed Him.

They...

dined with Him, often became hungry, often didn't have time to eat, twice fed the multitudes.

They...

received special authority to heal and deliver, became Jesus' confidants, were often rebuked and corrected, were entrusted with the mysteries of God's Kingdom.

They...

did what was not lawful on the Sabbath, broke the traditions of the elders, entered the Kingdom of God and walked in God's power.

They...

were frightened, fell on their faces, were much afraid, were very astonished, they marvelled, they were indignant and they rejoiced.

They...

became weary on a number of occasions, grumbled and withdrew, some stopped walking with Jesus; even after the resurrection some still doubted, they wrote the New Testament and died for their faith.

They...

were taught to pray for the Kingdom to come and for labourers for the harvest, yet slept while Jesus prayed, they spent ten days in continuous prayer before Pentecost, and prayed corporately every day afterward at 3:00 p.m..

They...

forgot provisions, made commitments they could not keep, individuals begged them to heal people they could not heal, they attempted to exorcise demons that would not leave, they rebuked parents bringing children to be blessed, abandoned Jesus in His deepest need, they were frequently jealous and ambitious, and they turned the world upside down after the resurrection.

They...

had a tendency to invent doctrines, tried to command fire to fall on the Samaritans, put a limit on how many times to forgive, presumed John would not die, wanted to build tabernacles for Jesus, Moses and Elijah, became the tabernacle of God on earth after Pentecost.

They...

prepared cities for the arrival of Jesus, prepared the Passover for the last supper, and were prepared by God to represent Christ; ultimately, they were prepared to die for the Lord.

They...

remembered what Jesus taught, received the great commission, faced terrible opposition from principalities and powers, Jews and Gentiles, yet they made disciples of all nations.

Let us read the words of Christ as though we were sitting as Jesus' feet learning. What did Jesus say concerning love, spiritual authority, or the power of faith? It is time to not be overwhelmed by our flaws and weaknesses. Rather, let us obey all Jesus taught and be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, even as His first disciples were.

by Francis Frangipane
www.frangipane.org

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The Centrality of The Cross

In Matthew 16:24-25 Jesus says: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life [literally, soul] will lose it, and whoever loses his life [literally, soul] for My sake will find it."

Here is the divine paradox: to save (protect) our soul we must lose it.

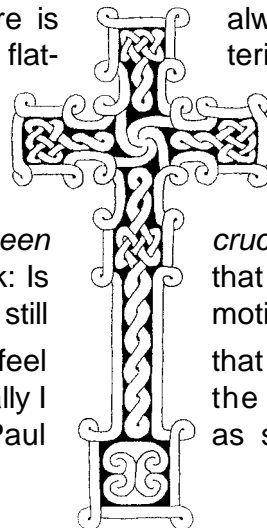
Before we can follow Jesus, there are two preliminary steps. First, we must deny ourself; we must say a resolute and final "No!" to our demanding, self-seeking ego. Second, we must take up our cross. We must accept the sentence of death which the cross imposes on us. Taking up our cross is a voluntary decision that each of us must make. God does not forcefully impose the cross upon us.

If we do not apply the cross personally in our own life, we leave a door open to demonic influence. There is always the danger that our uncrucified ego will respond to the seductive flat-

Pride is the main area in our character which Satan targets and flattery is the main lever he uses to gain entrance.

We must each apply the cross personally to ourselves. In Galatians 2:20 Paul says, *I have been who live* We each need to ask: Is crucified with Christ? Or am I still that true of me? Have I really been motivated by my soulish ego?

Many Christians today would feel that this solution is too radical. They would question whether this is really I the only way to be secure from deception. They tend to regard Paul as some kind of "super saint" whom they could never hope to imitate.



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Paul, however, does not see himself this way. His ministry as an apostle was unique, but his personal relationship with Christ was a pattern for all to follow.

In 1 Timothy 1:16 he says:

However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all long-suffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

Again, in 1 Corinthians 11:1 he says, *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

The only alternative to the cross is to put self in the place of Christ. But this is idolatry and opens the way for the evil consequences that invariably follow idolatry.

The cross is the heart and centre of the Christian faith. Without the cross proclaimed and applied, Christianity is left without a foundation and its claims are no longer valid. It has become, in fact, a false religion. As such - like all false religions - it is inevitably exposed to demonic infiltration and deception.

Extract from a series of talks given by Derek Prince to his co-workers in Derek Prince Ministries in March 1996. Copyright © Derek Prince Ministries

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

Come out from her and be separate?

(a potted history)



The Church
of Scotland

A story is told that a tourist once drove into a Highland village and saw four sizeable churches. Surprised at the number of denominations in such a sparsely populated area, he asked the reason for this and was told "There used to be two churches here but there was a union and now there are four!"

1733 The Associate Presbytery was constituted by Ebenezer Erskine with three others, because of assembly legislation on patronage and the right of the people to elect and call their own minister

1743 Reformed Presbyterian Church formed when a second minister joined Rev. John MacMillan to constitute various protestant groups, from outside the Church of Scotland, into a denomination.

1747 Some of the Associate Presbytery broke off to form the General Associate Synod because they regarded it as sinful to take the oaths required of burgesses of some cities by which they "acknowledged the true religion preached within Scotland and authorised by law.

1752 Reverend Thomas Gillespie was deposed by the General Assembly for refusing to take part in a "forced settlement" of a minister.

1761 Relief Church or Relief Presbytery, formed when Thomas Gillespie was joined by other minister.

1799 The "Auld Lights" of the Associate Presbytery held that the civil magistrate had a duty to impose the true faith on the people. The "New Lights" (claiming to have seen a 'new light rejected' this compulsion and separated.

1806 The General Associate Presbytery also separated into and "Auld Lights" and "New Lights" 1811 Reformed Presbyterian Church formed a Synod.

1820 The United Secession Church was formed by union of the previous "New Light' groups.

1842 The Synod of United Original Seceders or "Original Secession Church" was formed by a union of various groups dating back to the 1733 breakaway.

1843 The Free Church of Scotland was formed at the climax of "The ten years conflict." over the rights of landlords to "intrude" a minister on a congregation against the will of the presbytery.

1847 United Presbyterian Church formed by the union of the Relief Church and the United Secession Church.

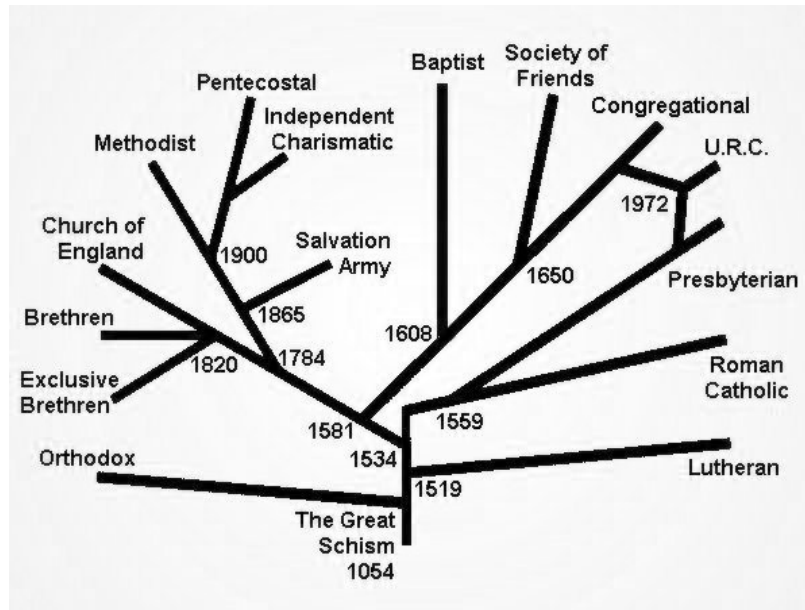
1893 The Free Presbyterian Church broke away from the Free Church because of the passing of the Declaratory Act of 1892 which distanced the Free Church from strict adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith.

1900 The United Free Church was formed with the union of most of the Free Church of 1843 and the United Presbyterian Church.

1929 Most of the United Free Church rejoined the Church of Scotland, a remnant stayed outside the union and became United Free Church(Continuing).

1956 The Original Secession Church rejoined the Church of Scotland.

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"It should go without saying that there were no denominations in the modern sense of the word in New Testament times. The denominational divisions which cut clean across the modern churches are part of our unfortunate heritage from the history of the church since then. But we should not jump to the conclusion that the New Testament churches were perfect in respect to their ideal oneness, or in any other way. The churches we read about were beset by many deep problems. Had it not been so, we would not have had much of the New Testament as we now have it. A good number of the letters were written to meet problems in the churches with which some of our present day difficulties seem mild by comparison."

"I WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THE CHURCH" **Rev John F. Balchin**

The Scottish Episcopal Church is today a part of the Anglican Communion, an association of churches in full communion with the Church of England, and specifically with its Primate, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Its origins date back to 1582 when the national Church of Scotland rejected government by bishops (episcopal government) in favour of government by elders (presbyterian government).

The first Baptist church met in Spitalfields, London in 1612. Thomas Helwys, a founder of the Baptist denomination, published one of the first books to call for religious liberty.

Seventeenth century Baptists refused to conform and be members of the Church of England, arguing that Christ, and not the King (or Queen) was head of the church and were persecuted for their beliefs.

Methodism flowed from the work of John Wesley, who was an Anglican clergyman, and he sought to keep Methodism as a revival movement within the Church of England.

Other eighteenth century branches of Methodism include Welsh Methodists (or Calvinistic Methodists,) from the work of Howell Hams, and the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion through the work of George Whitefield. The influence of Lady Huntingdon and Whitefield on the Church of England was a factor in the establishing of the Free Church of England in 1844.

In 1972, the Presbyterian Church of England united with the Congregational Church in England and Wales to form the United Reformed Church (URC).

A major difference between The Salvation Army and other religious denominations is that it does not include the use of sacraments (mainly holy communion, and baptism) in its form of worship. The Salvation Army has never said it is wrong to use sacraments, nor does it deny that other Christians receive grace from God through using them. Rather, the Army believes that it is possible to live a holy life and receive the grace of God without the use of physical sacraments and that they should not be regarded as an essential part of becoming a Christian.

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GUILD NEWS



The Guild held its AGM on March 17 and was well attended by members. Guests for the early part of the evening were the 'Bell Ringers' who entertained us with a most enjoyable range of music whilst dazzling us with their skill at getting lovely ringing sounds from the bells.

The existing members of the Management Team were re-elected and Margaret Calder was nominated and agreed to join the Management Team. Tribute was paid to Wilma Miller for her dedication to the Guild over the years and members were saddened by her untimely death. She would be greatly missed, not least by the Management Team, for her wide experience and knowledge of the Guild.

After the Treasurer gave her report it was also agreed to present cheques of £ 100 each to The Light Factory and The St Peters and St Andrew's Welfare Fund.

A combined Guilds' Easter Praise was the last item on our programme for the session and this took place in The Episcopal Church, St Peter and the Holy Rood. Members of the various Guilds took part in the service and others attended as part of the congregation. A lovely tea was provided at the end of the service.

Guild members, with the help of fellow Church members and friends, undertook a bag-packing on 28th March to raise money for this Session's Project 'The Leprosy Mission, Walk in the Light' and raised £550. A big 'Thank-you' to everyone who helped or contributed in any way.

Following a suggestion at the AGM it was decided to have informal meetings on Monday afternoons once a month for coffee and a chat, to help members to keep in touch during the summer months. The first of these took place on 4' May in the Pentland Hotel with the next one diared for Monday 2nd June when we hope to meet up with Guild members and friends once again.

The Caithness Presbyterial Council Church of Scotland Guild is to hold the Summer Rally in Canisbay Church on Wednesday 18th June at 7.30 pin, with the Autumn Rally following on Wednesday 24th September. The guest speaker for the Summer Rally is Ms Ann Bowie, currently National Convenor of the Guild.

The Management team will soon begin the process of preparing the syllabus for the next session starting in September. The Guild Theme for the coming year is 'He restores my soul', the third part of a three year series under the banner 'Let's live: Body, Mind and Soul.' Several members of the Management Team have attended workshops in Inverness and Castletown about the Theme and the Topic 'Let's talk about the Search for Spirituality'. These workshops were informative and full of ideas for members to take back to their Guilds to help with planning for the new Session. With God's help we hope to provide a programme that will not only entertain our members but will also be thought provoking and uplifting.

Meanwhile may we wish everyone an enjoyable and relaxing summer and we hope that a number of members will be able to attend the Summer Rally.

With best wishes

**Margaret Stephen (Contact person)
On behalf of the Guild Management Team**

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.