

Free Church **Witness**



SEPTEMBER 2014 ISSUE



Kenneth MacRae

Fifty Years On

Rev John J Murray





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- 28 Inverness, Strath (Lochalsh)

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Wilt thou not Revive us? (Part I)

Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? (Psalm 85:6)

Here we have a prayer in which the Psalmist is earnestly pouring out his heart to God for revival. He felt the great need in his day. And do we not need revival in our day? Surely this is the great prayer God's people should be pleading in our day! We look back over the years and notice a massive decline in church membership. Great preachers we knew in our youth are no longer with us. Godly Christians who once were pillars in evangelical churches have been taken home. The church today appears to be dying if not already dead. Worldliness has invaded the church. Christians are sleeping. Spiritual discernment is lacking. The fear of God is missing not just in society in general, but even from the church. Preaching is powerless. Few real conversions are taking place. Things seem to be going from bad to worse. It has been 150 years since the last great revival in our country. What does the future hold? Will things continue to deteriorate? Will the true church die out in Britain? Will God remove His candlestick from its place?

Jonathan Edwards' grandfather Solomon Stoddard was minister of Northampton from 1672 till 1729, almost

60 years. Edwards writes concerning his ministry that he had five harvests, as he called them, when many were added to the church. Some of these times were much more remarkable than others, and the ingathering of souls more plentiful. Yet there seemed to be a great falling away after the last of these with licentiousness, frequenting the tavern and lewd practices becoming common. But then in 1734-35 there was the first great revival of Edwards' time. The place was transformed. Everyone became concerned about their souls. Multitudes were saved. The fear of God came down on the community. He gives a full account of this in his *Narrative of Surprising Conversions*. The second revival was 1740-42 and is outlined in *An Account of the Revival of Religion in Northampton, 1740-2* (a letter written in 1743). The second revival was part of the Great Awakening and was much more widespread, covering all New England and the other colonies and with a related movement in the British Isles. Reading what Edwards has written concerning these great movements of God's Spirit stirs our hearts and makes us long for such a mighty revival of God's Spirit in our own times.

I. What is Revival?

Revival is a specific period of increased spiritual interest and renewal in the life of a church or many churches, either regionally or globally. This should be distinguished from the use of the term 'revival' to refer to an evangelistic meeting or series of meetings. Revival is when God comes down and works mightily in the church bringing new life and spiritual interest, prayerfulness, holiness of life and zeal for the conversion of souls. Communities become aware of God in a new way and many unbelievers are born again.

I come from the Island of Lewis which has been blessed with a series of revivals since the gospel first came there with power in 1828. Leaving school I went to Aberdeen as a student and became involved in the Christian Union. Hearing where I came from, folk would say to me that they had heard of the Lewis Revival. Initially, puzzled, I responded, 'Which one?' They had heard of the Duncan Campbell revival in 1949. It was just one among a whole series and certainly not the biggest but the difference in this one was that an outsider was involved and that after the revival he went to the Keswick Convention and other places talking about the great work in which he had been involved. I remember the last general revival in Lewis which took place in the early 1970s when some hundreds were converted in the space of a year or so. God used ordinary preaching and common phrases, accompanied with power, to deeply convict the ungodly. The Lord's people were roused from their lethargy. There was no doubting that the work was of God and many lives were marvellously transformed. Converts from that movement are the elders in the church there today.

In the history of God's people in the Old Testament there were several revivals. God visited His people when they were slaves in the land of Egypt and brought them out with a mighty arm and made them into a great nation. The book of Judges records several revivals. The people fell away from God, began to worship idols, and God punished them by sending some neighbouring king to invade their land and oppress them. After several years of oppression they repented and cried to God and He raised up a deliverer for them, e.g. Gideon, Deborah and Barak, and Jephthah. All was well during the reign of that judge but after he died they again tended to forget God, fell away into idolatry and judgment came upon them once more. Samuel the prophet was used in a series of revivals which came to their climax in the reign of David and the early days of Solomon. Kings Hezekiah and Josiah also saw wonderful revivals. Led by the king the people as a whole turned from idolatry to the living God. Repentance was followed by joy and gladness and the rich blessing from the Lord.

Essentially revival is an outpouring of God's Spirit upon the church bringing new spiritual life to God's people, convicting of sin, stirring up repentance, awakening

interest in spiritual concerns, increasing zeal for God's glory, burdening with prayer and making Christ and the gospel the centre of life. Revival impacts the unconverted by convicting them of their sin, of God's holiness and justice, of the hell to which they are heading, so that they cry to the Lord for mercy and are unsatisfied till they find peace with God through Jesus Christ. Edwards speaks of the presence of God felt in the community; God's day was a delight, the churches were packed, the worship was earnest and the people listened hungrily to the sermons. Some wept in sorrow for sin and others rejoiced in their own salvation and in others being saved. The town, said Edwards, was full of love and joy and distress.

2. We need Revival

We are not told who was the author of this Psalm and we can only guess when it was written. Many commentators think it was composed some time after the return from the exile in Babylon. Initially on returning to the land of Israel there was great excitement and euphoria. God's promise through Jeremiah had been fulfilled and after seventy years of bondage they were free to return to their own land. They built an altar and started the sacrifices once more. The rubbish was cleared and they proceeded to lay the foundations for the second temple. However, before long, the enthusiasm waned. There were enemies discouraging them. They had to build houses for their own families, clear the land, plant crops and look after their own livelihoods. But in all their work for themselves they were earning money to put it into a bag with holes (Haggai 1:6). They needed revival and Haggai called them back to the work of building the temple of the Lord and the blessing followed.

This situation would certainly fit the Psalm but it may come from another time in Israel's history. Days of declension were not uncommon in the experience of God's people in the Old Testament. The pious Israelite must often have felt the need and longed for revival, for a real, mighty work of God's Spirit. How often down through the centuries would the child of God have prayed prayers like this!

The Psalmist begins by remembering that there were real days of blessing in the past: 'LORD, thou hast been favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob' (v1). God had often been favourable to His people. He had delivered them from captivity and from tyrants who had been given power over them because of their backsliding. God has always been actively training His people. When they go astray after idols, or lust, or violence, He sends prophets to warn them and if they will not give heed He will send His chastisement to bring them back. This had happened in the experience of the Psalmist.

'Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast



'Even the best of churches show little true devotion to God, holiness of life, love for deep doctrine, reading of Puritan theology, solid fellowship in the Scriptures, earnestness in secret prayer, compassion for lost souls and zeal for God's glory.'

covered all their sin' (v2). Praise God for forgiveness of sins, for justification by faith alone. God loves to pardon for Christ's sake. 'Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger' (v3). Yes God is angry with sinners. Even His elect feel His anger, though thankfully only for a moment: 'For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer' (Is.54:7-8).

The Psalmist is aware that he and his people have again backslidden and turned from the Lord. There is nothing easier than to backslide. Satan is always tempting and the flesh loves sin. Their environment in a sinful world makes sin seem natural and normal. So the Psalmist cried out, 'Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?' (vv4-5).

We too have experienced the favour of God. The Gospel first came to these shores at an early date. Some reckon that it happened in the First Century. Paganism came in again with the invasion of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes from Northern Europe. God once again sent missionaries such as Columba from Ireland. The church again backslid into Medieval darkness but God sent the Reformers of the Sixteenth Century with a mighty revival - Luther, Calvin, Cranmer, Tyndale and Knox. What a revival it was

that chased Roman darkness from our shores. Decline followed and then God raised up the Puritans with a new revival. Again there was spiritual backsliding but God raised up Whitefield and the Wesleys and Jonathan Edwards and brought about the Great Awakening of the Seventeenth Century. Decline followed and then once again revival came in the Nineteenth Century 1859-60. Alas since then there has been a steady decline, one hundred and fifty years of it.

Look at the situation we are in today. Liberalism came in from Germany in the Nineteenth Century and took over the mainline churches. The Bible is no longer the infallible, authoritative Word of God. Evolutionary teaching has removed the Creator from the throne and man no longer feels the need to make his peace with his Maker. Mass evangelism has produced its own man-made revival with its impressive results which must not be searched or examined closely. The Charismatic Movement has produced signs and wonders and its health and wealth Gospel which promises a heaven in this world providing you generate your own faith in the movement and its leaders. Fake healings, false prophecies and gobbledegook tongue-speaking, as John MacArthur puts it, characterises many of the biggest churches. Even the better Reformed churches have looked longingly across the Atlantic at the mega-churches there and have struggled to follow them and be seeker-sensitive, to entertain and not to offend in the hopes of sharing in their seeming success. Church services must first

and foremost be welcoming and entertaining. Intelligent young people are looking for exciting music, trivial choruses repeated ad infinitum and short sermons full of jokes and anecdotes. Sin, holiness, the wrath of God, the judgment day and hell must not be mentioned. The greatest fear in the church is legalism rather than worldliness. But despite all this the church continues to decline drastically in numbers. Occasionally gifted individuals with teams of helpers and lots of social activities can gather some hundreds together. However the church is making little impact on society and there are few conversions. Such conversions as there are, tend to be superficial and do not last. Growth tends to be by sheep-stealing from smaller congregations as even in Christian circles a crowd draws a crowd and modern Christians show little ability to think for themselves and stand on their own feet. The fear of God is to be found neither in the world nor in the church. God has in a sense turned His back on us. His judgment rests upon the church in our land.

Even the best of churches show little true devotion to God, holiness of life, love for deep doctrine, reading of Puritan theology, solid fellowship in the Scriptures, earnestness in secret prayer, compassion for lost souls and zeal for God's glory.

Outside the church apathy pervades society. To raise the subject of Christ and Christianity, sin and judgment and heaven and hell creates embarrassment. People will happily talk on any other subject. We have the good news of the gospel but no one wants to hear it. Invite folk to a party or a wedding and they will come in droves, but invite them to the gospel wedding feast and they will have all kinds of excuses. There is no sense of spiritual need and so the proclamation of salvation through the blood of Christ is like casting one's pearls before swine.

3. We Need God

'Wilt thou not revive us'. We need God to come. We need Him to act. We can arrange outreach visitation, evangelistic campaigns, conferences, the best visiting preachers, Christianity Explored courses, discipleship programmes, etc., but it is all in vain without the Spirit of God. It is God we need and nothing less. We need the sovereign, powerful, regenerating, reviving work of the Spirit of God. We have a valley full of dead bones, very many and truly dead, indeed whitened by the sun (Ezek.37). Can these bones live? There is nothing we can do to revive them. But God gathers the bones, makes the flesh and sinews to grow, but they are still dead corpses. Ezekiel tells us: 'And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I

prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD' (Ezek.37:8-13).

Christ commanded his disciples 'that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence' (Acts 1:4-5). The disciples waited in prayer in the upper room. Ten days were to pass before the Spirit came. Now Pentecost was unique. It was a once-for-all historical-redemptive act of God. It was the coming of the Comforter who would abide with the church till Christ came again. Yet Acts 2 also demonstrates how much we need God's Spirit to revive the church and convert sinners. Following the pouring out of the Spirit the disciples had new boldness, an unction from the Holy One which taught them things which before were very unclear to them, power in preaching and, most amazing of all, conviction of sin accompanying the heralding of the gospel and regeneration in the heart by the working of God's Spirit. Surely if God is teaching us one thing today in Britain it is that we need Him. He is demonstrating to us over and over again our weakness, inability and helplessness. 'Without me, ye can do nothing' (Jn.15:5). He also encourages us to say, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me' (Phil.4:13). Christ says, 'I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it' (Matt.16:18). The building is Christ's work and His alone. Yes Paul plants and Apollos waters but God gives the increase (1 Cor.3:6). No amount of planting and watering produces a harvest without God who gives the increase. The trouble with us is that we want some praise for ourselves but God will not give His glory to another. Oh that we would learn our own helplessness so that we would look to God and depend totally on Him!

To be continued

(This is the first part of a sermon which was preached at a conference on Jonathan Edwards held in Durham University (February 2014) and is due to appear in the appendix of the forthcoming book Jonathan Edwards for the Church (Evangelical Press) which is composed of the lectures given at the conference.)



Obituary

Murdo Macleod, Elder, Scalpay

Murdo Macleod, elder in Scalpay congregation, fell asleep in Jesus on the 9th of February 2014. Murdo was born on 22nd May 1922, the last of 7 children. His mother died at the age of 34 when he was two and he was raised by his father and his twelve-year-old sister of whom he often spoke. He attended Scalpay School and after leaving school became a fisherman on a boat belonging to his uncle. Later he joined the merchant navy and served in the Second World War when the ship he was on was torpedoed. After the war he worked on the Clyde in Glasgow in the summer season, and spent winters fishing out of Scalpay. Murdo married Marion MacSween on 26th March 1957. They had three daughters, one of whom, Rachel, was killed in a tragic accident on 30th August 1975. In 1961 he bought his first fishing boat and in 1968 he had his own boat built, the Britannia. Having eventually sold the boat to retire he found the lure of the sea too much to give up, and bought a smaller boat with which he fished locally for shellfish.

He came to know the Lord in the mid-1970s shortly after the tragic death of his daughter and professed faith

in September 1978 and was elected to the Eldership in February 1993. Murdo loved to tell of the time he met with the Lord and could point out the very spot where this happened as he walked to the prayer meeting one evening. Indeed his sense of the Lord's presence at that time was so great that when he sat in the pew beside a lady and enquired of her if she felt the presence of the Lord in the seat he was quite astonished that she did not!

Murdo was known for his quiet wisdom and when he contributed at church courts he was always worth listening to. He loved the means of grace and was seldom missing if at all able to attend. Indeed he often did so when many others of better health would excuse themselves.

It was ever a joy to see, in visiting their home, the great love and affection between those aged saints of God, Murdo and Morag, sitting holding hands and when able conversing about the matters of eternity. At the end he died peacefully at home surrounded by his beloved and caring family. What a testimony to the godly respect and care that is so often missing nowadays in the way many elderly relatives are treated.

We would assure them all, his wife Morag, his daughters Marian and Donella, his granddaughters and his son in law Derick, that we prayerfully bring them before the Lord in their parting for a time from their beloved one.

Rev K Macdonald

Obituary

Rev Ronald MacKenzie



Rev Ronald MacKenzie passed away to his eternal reward on Thursday 6th March 2014, aged 77. Born and raised in Ibrox, Glasgow, of North Skye parentage, he knew the privileges of a godly upbringing both at home and under the influence of Rev Alexander MacLeod and Rev Murdo MacAulay, successively ministers of Govan Free Church.

It was early in life he came to a saving interest in Christ and from the first his desire was that others should discover the lovely Saviour whom he had found. To one neighbour of a similar age he spoke of how it was not enough to merely presume that he was a true believer because he was baptised or brought up in a 'Christian' country. Soon he was bringing him along to hear the Gospel and his friend could say with the Samaritans, 'Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world'.

For some time he worked in the banking industry, but sensing the call of the Lord, he offered himself for the work of the Ministry. After studying at the University of Glasgow, where he graduated MA, and the Free Church College, he was duly licensed to preach, being ordained to the Gospel Ministry and admitted to the charge of Coigach in Wester Ross in 1976. In 1980 he was translated to Glenelg & Arnisdale where he remained until, in God's providence, ill health necessitated retirement in 2000. In both charges he preached Christ faithfully and was a tender shepherd of the flock. Especially in Glenelg during the first half of his ministry there the congregation knew encouragement. Despite later discouragements he continued faithfully preaching the same truths which had been used of God earlier, knowing that what was needed by young and old, new converts and the unconverted, was sound apostolic doctrine preached in love and blessed to the souls of men by the effectual working of the Spirit of Christ. In addition to his pastoral duties he also served for many years most efficiently as Clerk to the Free Presbytery of Lochcarron. In later years he often spoke of how Presbytery meetings in these days were more like fraternals, such as the love, peace and harmony amongst the brethren.

A man of principle who knew the history of the Free Church and loved her principles because they were biblical and God-honouring, he was much grieved over the situation in the Church and it was no surprise that

he associated with the FCC in 2000. Thereafter, as health allowed, he continued to preach wherever he was asked. When in 2003 the Church established again her own Seminary for training candidates for the ministry it was little surprise that Mr Mackenzie was asked to lecture in Church History. He had a deep knowledge both of the history and the theology of the Scottish Church, as well as the Free Church in particular. Visitors to his hospitable home were often treated to a wealth of anecdotes relating to incidents and characters associated with the church in the Highlands. He was not one given to ostentatious display, but one could not leave without being impressed that this was a man who knew his theology and history but above all feared the Lord and rejoiced in Jesus Christ. Like Nathanael, it could be said, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!'

In 1975 he married Christina Beaton, herself a native of Skye, and together they had two sons, Donald and Ronald. She proved a true helpmeet to him and, being a nurse, was of great help to him in the management of the chronic lung condition which affected his health over many years. To the end he remained bright and cheerful, trusting in his Saviour, whose nearer presence he now enjoys. We commend his dear wife Christina, sons Donald and Ronald, Ronald's wife Becky and the three grandchildren to the Father of mercies and God of all comfort. 'Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever'.

Rev Graeme Craig

Letters from the Black Watch

Donald John Morrison

Some time ago our church sent welfare boxes to all the soldiers of the Black Watch 3rd Battalion stationed in Afghanistan. You may recall that the fantastic sum of approximately £8,000 was donated by generous givers throughout our congregations. Along with various toiletry items, shortbread and other goodies for the squaddies, each box contained a small New Testament, gospel tracts, and also a letter of encouragement. The parcels were all patiently and lovingly filled by Derick Gillies supported by a faithful band of loyal helpers at the Westhill Church in Inverness, from where they were eventually despatched. Formal confirmation was received shortly afterwards that all the boxes had safely reached their final destination on the front lines. I have sifted through the many letters which came back from the soldiers and here provide you with extracts of what they said in appreciation. Pray that the Word of God which they all received would be blessed to their souls and that they will come to fight the good fight of faith as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The contents were superb and hugely appreciated and I particularly enjoyed the shortbread. Absolutely delicious! It means a huge amount to the men that they are in people's thoughts and they thoroughly appreciate the time and effort that you have taken in sending these parcels. Thank you.

Robert Hedderwich (Grenadier Company)

On behalf of all the soldiers to whom you have sent parcels, whilst deployed on Operation Herkules 15, I wish to thank you for your kindness and sincerity. Such things don't just happen, and require a great deal of behind the scenes work and effort. It has greatly encouraged the boys to face the day-to-day challenges and dangers they have had to face.

Roddy Williams (B Company, 3 Scouts)

To the men of 5 Platoon, this has been a lone and very varied tour, taking us all over Helmand Province in a number of different roles. A big, big thank you for the encouragement with the generous parcels. They were deeply appreciated.

CPL George Winter (5 Platoon, 3 Scouts)

We are all deeply touched to receive your parcels and with them the thoughts and best wishes from home. It is such a huge encouragement to us all out here to know

that what we do is appreciated. It really helps to know there is such strength behind us. I would urge you all to bear those men in mind, as they struggle to come to terms with what they have seen and what they have done. For many of them their "battles" are only just beginning.

Captain Rob Colquhoun

I would like to pass on our gratitude to yourself and your church for your kindness and generosity. As a believer myself, I was greatly encouraged by the message of your church. It is a comfort to be reminded that though thousands of miles apart, I walk side by side with my brothers and sisters in the Lord. I have not stopped giving thanks for you before God. Remembering you in my prayers (Ephesians 1:15).

2 Lt Voce Russell (Alpha Grenadier Company)

Thank you for the New Testament. Indeed God's protection and guidance is with and upon us all. Without Him nothing would be possible. I must say that I have come across many non-believing soldiers and spoke to quite a few. Our love to you all back home. Please continue to pray on for us.

Ryan Phillips (3 Scots, Battle Group)

Thank you for your prayers and support. Remembering us before God is appreciated. Our hope is that your store room will never go empty. May God bless you all for what you have done.

D Thompson (3 Scots, A Company)

A big thank you for your parcel and good wishes. Thank you particularly for the New Testament which will remain with me in my travels.

Alex Phillips (3 Scots Brigadier)

The parcels that you so kindly organised through your contacts have now arrived and more importantly have been received by all in the company. A massive thank you to everyone who supported what you did. It was a great morale boost.

Captain M A Dobson

The number of parcels received was truly overwhelming and showed a great amount of support to the jocks. The toiletries will prove very useful and the shortbread didn't last very long!

Captain Al Sweet

Welfare boxes for us are few and far between. Thanks for putting all the effort to make a box for us all and keeping us in your thoughts. It is very much appreciated. It is good to know that good people back home are still thinking of us. Thanks for the morale.

CPL Arnold (Sniper Platoon)



News



Ballyclare & Doagh Congregation

Rev Trevor Kirkland

On Tuesday 1st July the Southern Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) held a Recognition service in Doagh,

County Antrim. Following the decision of the General Assembly in May that the congregation known as Ballyclare & Doagh be formally

received, the Southern Presbytery acted accordingly in organising such a service of recognition. This is the first such congregation in Northern

Desk



Left to Right: Rev David Fraser; Rev Graeme Craig; Rev Gavin Beers; Rev Trevor Kirkland; Mr John Gillies; Mrs Kirkland; Rev Andrew Allan; Rev John J Murray.

Ireland. Central to the service was the signing of the Formula by the minister, the Rev E Trevor Kirkland, which is essential to him becoming a minister in the FCC. Some 70 people gathered to witness this historic event. The Rev John J Murray in his opening remarks made reference to the long connection between Scotland and Ireland noting that the grandson of John Knox, Josias

Welsh, was the first Presbyterian minister in Templepatrick. Earlier in the day there was a trip to the grave and meetinghouse of Welsh. The first Presbyterian minister in Ireland was from Scotland – the Rev Edward Brice in 1613. A sermon was delivered by the Rev Gavin Beers of Ayr FCC who himself is a native of Northern Ireland. He took as his text Isaiah 40:9: ‘O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up

into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!’ He spoke movingly of three things: First, Who will spread the Gospel? Second, What is the Gospel? Third, How shall we spread the Gospel? The Rev Graeme Craig gave an address to Mr Kirkland, while the

Rev Andrew Allan spoke appropriately to the congregation highlighting the importance of commitment.

Following the service, an excellent supper was served. Thanks are due to all the ladies who baked, bought and brought to the satisfaction of all.

The Rev Kirkland then read a number of greetings to the congregation which had been received from across the Denomination from those who were unable to attend. The Rev Bill Malcolmson (Congregational Reformed Church) spoke kindly and appreciatively. The service concluded with the singing of Psalm 72:16-19, following which the Scottish delegation left to make the long journey home.



Persecution and Misery, Sudan and South Sudan

E Kendal

South Sudan declared independence from Sudan on 9 July 2011. Three years on, Sudan is pursuing Islamisation and ethnic-religious cleansing, while South Sudan has descended into chaos and civil war. In Sudan, churches are being demolished as part of a systematic campaign of persecution aimed at driving Christians out of Sudan. In South Sudan, progress has been crippled by corruption and conflict. Some 1.5 million South Sudanese are displaced, living along with Nuba refugees from Sudan in seriously over-crowded, disease-ridden camps. Some four million are facing famine. The rainy season has started, the roads are closed and because there was no planting there will be no harvest. Please remember the Church in Sudan and South Sudan, praying for wisdom for her leaders and that God the Redeemer will intervene.

Lewis Christian Conference 2014

D Murray

This year's conference took place from Friday 27th June to Monday 30th June in Stornoway. The Speaker was Dr Sinclair B Ferguson. Dr Ferguson, who retired last year as Senior Minister of First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, South Carolina, addressed the conference on the theme 'In Christ Alone'. He helped focus our attention on the centrality and completion of Christ's work in securing the salvation of His believing people.

Dr Ferguson gave three edifying conference messages:

- i) From Philippians 3, on the conversion of Saul of Tarsus.
- ii) From Romans 6, where he explained what it means to be in union with Christ and experience the transforming power of God, the old self having been crucified with Christ.
- iii) From Romans 5:1-11, where he spoke of the privileges that belong to the Christian believer in Jesus Christ. All of the conference messages were spiritually uplifting and personally challenging. He encouraged us as believers in

Dr Ferguson addresses the Conference in Stornoway High Church

the Lord Jesus Christ to rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

The High Church building was kindly made available for the conference meetings again this year.

Once again we were pleased to welcome representatives from Christian Focus Publications and the Christian Institute to the conference and they updated us on the work that they are involved in and provided information and bookstalls.

The Conference organisers were very encouraged with the attendances at all of the conference meetings this year from across the island's churches and there were also visitors attending the conference from other parts of the UK and some from overseas. It is a blessing for God's people to gather together in unity and enjoy Bible teaching, Psalm-singing and fellowship. We pray that the Lord's blessing will follow all that took place during this year's Lewis Christian Conference. CD and DVD sets will be produced and may be ordered by e-mailing:

lewischristianconference@gmail.com

The Conference committee is also delighted to announce that next year's conference will see a return of Dr Charles Price who spoke at the first Lewis Christian Conference in 2012 (DV).

Named Persons

Christian Institute

The Christian Institute, concerned parents and other groups have launched legal action against plans to appoint a Named Person for every child in Scotland. The Named Person initiative will see a state guardian assigned to every child between birth and 18 years old. They will be able to share confidential information, including medical records, with a wide range of public authorities and may intervene without parental consent. The scheme will also result in resources being overstretched, depriving families who actually want them and at risk children who really

need them.

Under Scottish Government plans the scheme is set to be rolled out across the whole of Scotland by 2016, but it is already operating in some areas.

The legal papers opposing the plans were lodged by The Christian Institute, Christian charity CARE, Tymes (The Young ME Sufferers) Trust, and the Family Education Trust. Remember this action in your prayers. It is a huge invasion of the family to have government-appointed figures interfering and where will it end?

Christian Bakers involved in Legal Action

Christian Institute

A Christian-run bakery in Northern Ireland is facing legal action after it declined to produce a pro-gay marriage campaign cake. The McArthur family, who own Ashers Baking Company in the Belfast area, said they could not fulfil the order because it conflicts with their Christian beliefs about marriage being between a man and a woman. The Christian Institute is supporting the bakery, and says the case proves the need for the law to reasonably accommodate family-run businesses with firmly held beliefs.

In May, volunteer LGBT activist Gareth Lee asked for a cake to be decorated with the slogan 'Support Gay Marriage'. He also wanted a logo of his campaign group QueerSpace and a photo of Sesame Street's Bert and Ernie in an embrace to be printed on the cake. When the order came through to the head office, the manager and directors decided to decline the request on conscience grounds, and offered Mr Lee a full refund.

Despite the fact that the Northern Ireland Assembly recently voted against redefining marriage for the third time in two years, the taxpayer-funded Equality Commission for Northern Ireland sent a letter claiming that the bakery had acted unlawfully by refusing to decorate the cake with the slogan. The Commission said the bakery had breached equality laws which outlaw discrimination in the provision of goods and services. Online photos of a QueerSpace event in May show that the group managed to get a cake decorated in the way they wanted from a different bakery.

The manager of the business, Daniel McArthur, said they are happy to bake cakes for anyone, but could not fulfil that particular order as it clashed with the ethos of the business. 'We are Christians and our Christianity reaches to every point of our lives, whether that's at home or in the day-to-day running of the business'. Explaining why they decided not to fulfil the order, he said: 'We thought that this order was at odds with our beliefs, certainly was in contradiction with what the Bible teaches. Although we have found this experience certainly unsettling and disruptive to our day-to-day business, we are certainly convinced that we have made the right decision, and we continue to take the stance that we do take', he added.

The company was named after a verse from the Bible which says 'Bread from Asher shall be rich and he shall yield royal dainties' (Genesis 49:20).

The Christian Institute's Legal Defence Fund is supporting Ashers Baking Company. The Institute's Director, Colin Hart, said: 'This is a sign of things to come exactly as we predicted'.

A Refuge for Christian converts from Islam

Christian Concern

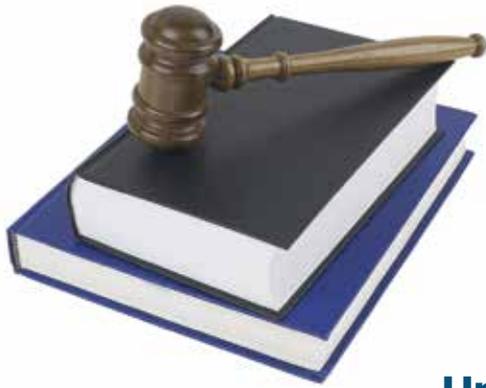
Christian Concern is backing plans to provide safe refuge for those who face ostracism or danger as a result of converting from Islam to the Christian faith. It is hoped that the network, provisionally named 'Converts to Jesus', will launch in the Autumn and be chaired by Nissar Hussain, a convert from Islam, who lives in Bradford. Nissar and his family have suffered as a result of following Jesus. He has been shunned by his family and been labelled a 'Christian Jew dog' whilst his wife has been sworn and spat at and his children have been ostracised by school friends. His car has been torched and an empty property next to his home set alight. He received a warning in advance but police told him that the threat was unlikely to be carried out. However, Mr Hussain refuses to be ashamed of Jesus, saying: 'it tells us in the New Testament that trials and tribulations are part of the Christian world'.

Andrea Williams explained: 'We are motivated by a deep sense of love and compassion for those that feel trapped in a situation from which they cannot escape. The penalty for them at best is to be cut off from their family; at worst they face death. This is happening not just in Sudan and Nigeria but in east London. The government has failed to deal with the rise in anti-Christian sentiment. We need more churches and Christians sacrificially to offer welcome, support and safety for those Muslims who embrace Jesus Christ'.

Church Poster labelled 'hate incident' by police

Attleborough Baptist Church in Norfolk has been investigated by police after a poster displayed outside the building attracted a complaint. The poster coupled a picture of burning flames with the words 'If you think there is no God you'd better be right!!' It was displayed near another sign advertising forthcoming events and promising visitors 'a very warm welcome'. But 20-year-old Robert Gladwin who lives near the church lodged a complaint. A police spokesman said that national guidance required them to investigate the complaint and that the matter had been recorded as a hate incident. The poster has been removed.

What a sad day we live in when it is regarded as hatred to seek the eternal good of your neighbours and warn them of hell as our Saviour did so often.



Books

Unsearchable Riches **Selected sermons of** **Rev Donald MacLean**

Ed. Robert J Dickie
Reformation Press,
pbk, 213pp, £8.95

Unsearchable Riches is a collection of twelve edifying sermons preached by Rev Donald Maclean, who was for many years an influential minister of the Free Presbyterian Church. They come from various periods in his life and include his final sermon preached in Inverness in 2009 when 94 years old, shortly before his death. It is a testimony to his strength of character and the grace given to him that he was willing and able to preach for so long. The volume is prefaced by a most helpful biographical introduction, which sketches out the salient facts of his life and helps to set the sermons in context, especially for those who may recognise the name but know little of the man. During a ministry of over sixty years he pastored first in Portree for twelve years and then in Glasgow for over forty years. He was also busily engaged in many other aspects of work within his own denomination.

The sermons themselves have been transcribed from recordings with only minimal editing. It is no easy job to reproduce sermons in this way and, on the whole, the editing has been effective. No doubt those who heard him preach would note that the printed sermons lack something of the warmth and authority of the original, but such is the contrast between the written and spoken word. They contain a series of three sermons on Christ's offices as Prophet, Priest and King and also a selection of sermons from Communion

seasons, including one example of an action sermon and the fencing of the table. It is a pity that the table addresses on that occasion were not also included. Readers will find the example of 'fencing the table' somewhat different from that more in vogue today, and probably reflects that which belonged to a former day in the Highlands. There is more focus on describing in detail those who should or should not come to the feast, than on the nature of the feast. While there is encouragement for souls to come to the table, one cannot help but feel that believers with sensitive souls would easily be put off rather than encouraged to fulfil their duty to obey the King's command to come to court and hear his Covenant read anew for their direction and comfort. The publishers have indicated that it is their intention to prepare more of Mr Maclean's sermons for publication. The believer cannot but be edified by these sermons and the unbeliever challenged to flee to Christ. May they be blessed to this end to many.

Rev Graeme Craig

The Heidelberg **Catechism** **Or Method of Instruction in** **the Christian Religion**

Banner of Truth Trust,
pocket pbk, 85pp, £10.00

To my shame I have to admit that this is the first time I have read through The Heidelberg Catechism. It is beautifully presented in this gift edition series with a soft, brown leather-type cover. It was written more than 80 years before the Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647) and approved by the



Synod of Heidelberg in 1563. There are 129 questions. The answers are longer than those in the Shorter Catechism and although similarly designed to be learned off by heart would I think be more difficult to memorise. They are more practical and pastoral. The answers are divided into 52 Lord's Days with two or three questions covered in each section. It has been the practice of many Dutch churches to preach through the Catechism each Sabbath evening and so to cover the whole Catechism once a year in the preaching. This ensures that their people are well-taught doctrinally.

The first question and answer give a sense of what follows:

I. Q. What is your only comfort in life and death?

A. That I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who, with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me, that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; yea that all things must work together for my salvation. Wherefore, by His Holy Spirit He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready henceforth to live for Him.

The second question explains the three sections into which the rest of the catechism is divided.

Q. What do you need to know in order to live and die in the joy of this comfort?

A. First, the greatness of my sin and misery. Second, how I am redeemed from all my sins and misery. Third, how I am to be thankful to God for such redemption.

I was rather surprised that in answer 37 it states that Christ bore 'the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race'. Very likely this simply reflects the early date of the catechism and the fact that at that stage controversy regarding limited atonement had not arisen. Christ died for the elect from every part of the human race.

Different kinds of questions are asked from those in the Shorter Catechism. For example

Q.42 Since then Christ died for us why must we also die?

A. Our death is not a satisfaction for our sin, but only a dying to sins and entering into eternal life.

It is possible to read one or two of the questions each day and reflect upon them with great profit. I would encourage all to purchase this little book and study it for their soul's profit.

Rev William Macleod

The Atonement

In its Relations to the Covenant, the Priesthood and the Intercession of our Lord

Hugh Martin

Banner of Truth Trust

hbk, 233pp, £15.00

The doctrine of the atonement was a major battleground in Victorian Evangelicalism, as a sentimental trend in society increasingly pushed the churches into adopting the teaching that Christ died, in some sense, for everyone. The error was not that everyone would be saved regardless of their response to the Gospel, but that a fuller and freer Gospel offer could be made on the basis of a universal atonement that had to be accepted by faith. In retrospect, of course, this 'four-point Calvinism' would merely prove a staging post in the relentless momentum of mainstream theology towards the twentieth-century heresy of universal salvation. Nonetheless, at the time it seemed to offer an appealingly broad basis for Gospel preaching, and even today, the error is not uncommon, particularly in New Calvinist circles.

This is a new edition of a treatise that directly challenged this view, first published in 1870. It came in the context of the controversy over the proposed union between the Free Church, still largely orthodox in theology, and the United Presbyterian Church, which increasingly embraced the universal atonement theory. Hugh Martin was not alone in recognizing the significance of the debate. Major books with the same headline title, and the same orthodox position, were published by Candlish (1867), Smeaton (1868 and 1870), Crawford (1871) and by the American A A Hodge (1867), while Martin's friend John Kennedy of Dingwall addressed the issue in *Man's Relations to God* (1869).

Yet Martin's work is by no means overshadowed by contemporaries, nor has it been rendered obsolete by subsequent writings, for he matches strict confessional orthodoxy with an intense originality of thought and argument that makes this possibly the most illuminating book in the field of soteriology (the doctrine of salvation) that I have read. Martin combined mathematical and theological genius with a mental instability, manifested in extreme highs and lows of emotions, that rendered him unfit for pastoral ministry. As a result, his remarkable energies, especially during his emotional 'highs', were poured into his writings, with *The Atonement* being unquestionably his single most significant work.

As the full title suggests, Martin reasons from the Covenant of Grace, which must be specific to those who will be saved, to expose the incoherence of universal atonement with federal theology. He then argues from the certain efficacy of Christ's active priestly work, and from the direct connection between that atoning work and the ongoing work of intercession, which again must be specific to the saved, to show that the atonement was equally both specific and certain. He counters the various theories of how a universal atonement may work, addressing five theologians in particular (though

neither McLeod Campbell nor Thomas Erskine, beloved of the present-day Church of Scotland, are mentioned, indicating their peripheral importance in their own lifetimes), of varying degrees of proto-liberalism, with particular place given to the Anglican FW Robertson. All are shown to be hopelessly contradictory and illogical in their atonement theories, rendering Christ a passive victim rather than an active priest in His expiatory death. Yet the tone is neither controversial nor detached, but engaged and reverently spiritual, much more so than the more classically academic nineteenth-century Free Church theologians like Cunningham and Bannerman, and so this is truly food for the soul as well as for the mind.

It must be admitted that this is not a book for everyone: the volume is written in a high academic register, which

will regularly send most readers to their dictionaries. Even those who can manage 'impetrate' (entreat) and 'infest' (invest) will probably be foxed by 'expiscate', a lovely old Latinate Scots verb of the seventeenth century meaning 'to investigate' (literally: 'to fish out!'). Persevering readers will find here a feast of original thought. As a single example, consider the reflections opened up by this sentence: 'On any other scheme than that of covenant unity and counter-imputation, repentance and faith contradict each other'. The text of the volume has been reset, and commences with a useful foreword by Sinclair Ferguson and his son John, now APC minister in Inverness, who recently completed a doctorate on Hugh Martin.

Rev Alasdair J Macleod

Partick FCC Induction

After a vacancy of nearly four years, Rev Andrew Allan was inducted as minister of Partick Free Church (Continuing) in Glasgow on Saturday 3rd May. The service, held in Balshagray Victoria Park Church of Scotland, was conducted by Rev William Macleod of Knightswood, who himself was minister of Partick from 1976 to 1993.

The induction brings to an end a very difficult time in the congregation's history. The church lost its minister in 2010 when Rev Murdo A N Macleod accepted a call to Snizort, Skye. Thereafter, legal action was taken against the congregation by the residual Free Church congregation in Partick and the congregation lost its church building and manse. Some elderly members of the congregation were thus forced to leave a building where they had worshipped all their lives. One of these members, the senior elder Donald Mackay, died shortly afterwards, and remains sorely missed from the services. However, the large attendance and enthusiastic singing at the induction pointed to the beginning of a new chapter. The congregation welcomed Mr and Mrs Allan and their daughter Katie. Mr Allan previously pastored the Highland congregation of Poolewe & Aultbea, in Wester Ross. He also takes a close interest in the progress of Gospel work in China, and has recently helped to found

the UK branch of Hudson Taylor Ministries which he serves as General Secretary.

Mr Macleod preached to the large gathering from Zechariah 4, with particular reference to the words of verse 6: 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts'. He acknowledged the many factors that lead evangelical Christians to discouragement in present circumstances, but reminded the congregation of the unchanging character and attributes of our God, and urged expectant prayer that the Spirit would work mightily in the present generation. Following his sermon, Mr Allan was inducted into his new charge. After the service most of the congregation adjourned to the hall to attend a reception where sumptuous refreshments were kindly and professionally provided. Welcome gifts were presented to Mr Allan, Mrs Debbie Allan and Miss Katie Allan, by Mr John N Gillies (elder), Mrs Cathie Ann Smith (elder's wife), and Sabbath School superintendent Miss Sandra MacKay, respectively.

After Interim Moderator Rev John J Murray had read several greetings to the new minister from congregations, colleagues and friends, Mr Murray was thanked for his sterling leadership and devoted service during the four-year vacancy. Thereupon elder Mr Norman Smith presented Mr Murray with a token of the congregation's appreciation. In returning thanks Mr Murray reminded the gathering of the difficult times that the congregation have come through but asserted that they are now to be encouraged as it is a new start for the congregation. Mr Allan then took the chair and asked ministerial colleagues, Rev James MacInnes, Rev Harry Woods and Rev Maurice Roberts to speak. Following their short speeches Mr Allan gave comprehensive thanks making mention amongst other things of his gratitude to the congregation of Poolewe & Aultbea for initially calling

him to be their minister. He said that it was good to see representatives of his former congregation at the induction. Thanks were expressed to the minister of Balshagray Victoria Park Church, Rev Campbell Mackinnon and the Kirk Session for the use of the church and halls. Also sincere thanks were given to the church officer Mr Robert Belmore for all his kind help in the arrangements. The day concluded with singing of Psalm 72:17-19 and the Benediction.

Partick FCC meets for worship at the Community Church, 1 Norby Road, Broomhill, on Sabbaths at 1.00pm and 6.30pm, and on Wednesday at 7.30pm.



Rev Andrew & Mrs Debbie Allan

Fifty Years On: Remembering the Rev Kenneth A MacRae

Rev John J Murray

As one who owes a debt of gratitude to the ministry of the Rev Kenneth A MacRae (1883-1964) it would not be right to let the 50th anniversary of his death (5th May) pass without a short tribute to his memory. He exercised a powerful ministry over 50 years in the Free Church of Scotland and his memory lives on in the monumental work, *Diary of Kenneth A MacRae*, edited with additional material by Iain Murray. He made a lasting impression on my early Christian life. I had correspondence with him and then entered into personal contact. I would like to highlight the significance of his testimony.

A commanding figure

Physically he was a striking figure of a man. There was the strong influence of the military background in which he was reared. He had a fine upright bearing and a brisk step. There was the same disciplined and methodical approach to his work and ministry. This combined

with his physical tenacity enabled him to undertake a prodigious amount of work throughout his life. Likewise in Church life and in national life he had a commanding voice.

A godly man

Many things could be said about him as a Christian. His subsequent life was shaped by that conversion experience which he records: 'I hereby put on record that since the Lord in his sovereign mercy entered my heart on the lonely summit of Bell's Hill in the Pentlands on that memorable afternoon – 9th August 1909 – I have ever sought to serve Him as my only Lord'. Finding no food for his newborn spiritual life in the church his parents attended in Edinburgh, he searched for and found a satisfying ministry in Free St Columba's, where the Rev Donald MacLean was the pastor. Soon after his conversion he tasted something of the old Highland piety in the childhood haunts of his native Ross-shire

Congregational Remittances - June 2014

	ORDINARY REMITTANCES			
	2014 June	2014 To June	2013 To June	
CENTRAL BUILDING FUND YTD 2014				
Presbytery of Inverness				
Aberdeen	0	1,300	10,827	9,149
Duthil-Dores	105,000	1,888	13,375	10,948
Inverness	0	3,500	14,070	14,000
Kilmorack & Strathglass	0	1,400	11,685	8,512
Total Inverness	105,000	8,088	49,957	42,609
Northern Presbytery				
Assynt & Scourie	276	0	3,045	673
Brora	20	2,500	8,957	10,808
Kiltearn	123	500	4,215	3,222
Tarbat	0	1,000	7,191	5,913
Total Northern	419	4,000	23,408	20,616
Southern Presbytery				
Arran	386	264	4,784	4,586
Ayr	0	800	5,360	5,898
Dumfries	0	0	0	0
Edinburgh	244,299	2,000	13,888	15,424
Glasgow - Partick	101,945	1,500	14,750	15,000
Glasgow - Shettleston	14	0	12,967	14,480
Glasgow - Knightswood	118	1,500	15,812	14,087
Rothsay	0	0	0	0
Total Southern	346,762	6,064	67,561	69,474
Outer Hebrides Presbytery				
Cross	0	1,802	13,927	11,366
Harris - Leverburgh	174	1,200	9,294	8,852
Harris - Scalpay	500	1,900	13,875	13,771
Knock & Point	0	1,065	7,314	6,929
North Uist	11,011	1,000	5,585	5,093
Stornoway	2,718	6,657	58,677	40,100
Total Outer Hebrides	14,403	13,624	108,672	86,112
Presbytery of Skye & Lochcarron				
Bracadale	0	0	6,364	4,833
Duirinish (Waternish)	0	0	3,000	2,000
Kilmuir & Stenscholl	35	0	8,477	7,573
Lochalsh	270	1,450	9,309	7,210
Poolewe & Aultbea	208	703	6,581	6,587
Ullapool	0	0	0	0
Portree	0	1,200	7,200	9,886
Snizort	0	1,300	12,035	10,475
Strath	20	310	2,959	4,115
Total Skye/Lochcarron	533	4,963	55,925	52,680
Smiths Falls			2,000	
Total Congregations	467,117	36,739	307,523	271,489
Other Donations	547	1,289	15,947	15,411
Legacy		0	111	3,000
TOTAL	467,664	38,028	323,581	289,900
Including Gift Aid	761		60,236	49,209

Continued from previous page

and he carried with him to the end of his days an ideal that he kept pursuing.

A soul winner

He was first and foremost a preacher and a pastor. He loved to preach Christ and Him crucified. He wrote: 'I must not lose sight of the preacher's golden rule: "Never preach a sermon which has not sufficient in it – used of the Spirit – to lead a soul to Christ"'. And he was used by God to lead many souls to the Saviour. In one place he gives figures of those brought to Christ under his preaching. He expected conversions. He was a diligent pastor. Typical entries in his diary include: 'Spent a most enjoyable day in Totscore. Gave a brief exhortation in every house upon a text which I judged to be suitable to the state of each family, and thus was able to bring the truth to twenty-three individuals capable of comprehending it, nine of whom either cannot or will not go out (to the church) to hear it'.

A champion for the truth

I think we are especially indebted to him as a champion for the cause of Christ in the midst of a deteriorating spiritual situation in the church in Scotland. Having experienced the soul-destroying nature of theological liberalism and the subtle danger of the new school of Victorian evangelism, he was wholly committed to

full-orbed Calvinism all his days. He was ministering in the midst of a drift from the old ways and no man understood the nature of the declension better than Mr MacRae. He felt that the distinctive Reformed testimony of the Free Church was being compromised by a weakening of principles. He had the discernment to see when some of his colleagues were supporting outside movements that would be harmful to the testimony of his Church.

In this connection he had a great concern to instruct the rising generation in these principles. As early as 1936, at the request of the Public Questions Committee and sanctioned by the General Assembly, he undertook a three month itinerary 'with a view to seeking to persuade the young people of the Church to a greater interest in and zeal for the message and testimony which has been given the Free Church to declare'. He prepared a sheet 'What the Free Church Stands For' which was given out at the close of each meeting. The account of the tour in the Diary is most revealing. It highlighted a great need for such instruction, especially in congregations south of the Highland line.

Sadly the situation did not improve and in later years Mr MacRae had to fight some battles in the courts of the Church. Things came to a head in the 1950s. A booklet which he wrote on his voyage to Australia in 1953 was

published under the title, *The Resurgence of Arminianism*, in 1954, coinciding with the time of the Greater London Crusade of Dr Billy Graham. The General Assembly of the Free Church in May 1954 had indicated public approval of the Crusade. Mr MacRae in a letter published in *The Monthly Record* in September 1954 gave 'another point of view' and felt that the approval was 'a betrayal of our testimony'. Coming to the 1955 General Assembly with an Overture from his Synod to deal with the matter in hand he faced some bitter opposition and the motion was defeated by 53 votes to 37. It was a watershed in the history of the Church. He recorded in his Diary: 'It was a sad Assembly, which chilled my heart and filled me with apprehension as to the future'.

A voice in the nation

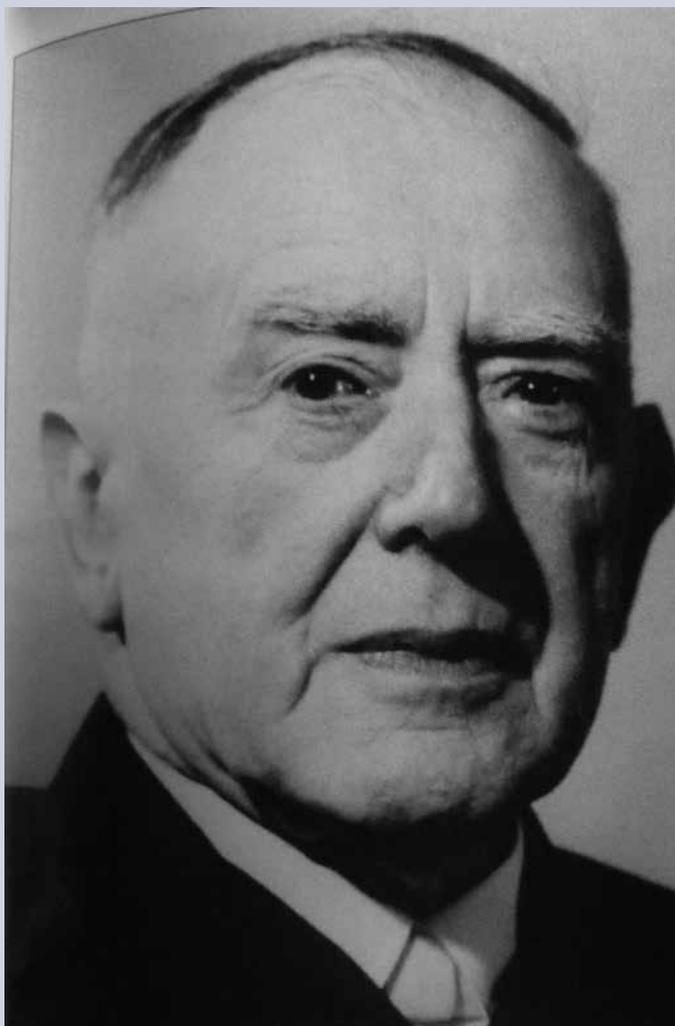
If we assess the situation carefully we will discover that Mr MacRae was probably the last preacher of the Word who made a lasting impact on the nation. He was a firm believer in the church's duty to call statesmen (the magistrate) to account with regard to the laws of God. He regularly instructed his own people about the threats that were arising in the nation, and he was so highly respected that he could carry many in the community with him in opposition to encroachments on the Sabbath. He used the correspondence columns of the newspapers

to great effect. A tribute in the local paper after his passing said: 'Probably no man in his day has done more by word and by pen and appropriate action to keep the moral and spiritual tone of the island at a high level'.

Mr MacRae was thrilled to discover in the late 1950s a resurgence of interest in the Reformed Faith, manifested by the reprinting of old classics on both sides of the Atlantic. In his eightieth year he travelled to London to conduct services in the Free Church congregation there and to go on to the city of Leicester to speak at the first Banner of Truth Trust Ministers' Conference when he shared a platform with fellow stalwarts in the faith, Professor John Murray and the Rev W J Grier. Belfast. Back in Stornoway he reported that he had seen in England 'a little cloud like a man's hand'. He concluded: 'Worm Jacob may yet thresh the mountains'.

When he died in Stornoway in May 1964 the crowd wishing to attend his funeral was so enormous that two separate services had simultaneously to be held, one in the main church building and the other in the Seminary in Francis Street, both packed to capacity. The press reported that at least a thousand men took part in the procession. 'Hundreds of women lined the streets many of them weeping'.

May God raise up men like him in our day!



'Mr MacRae was probably the last preacher of the Word who made a lasting impact on the nation. He was a firm believer in the church's duty to call statesmen (the magistrate) to account with regard to the laws of God. He regularly instructed his own people about the threats that were arising in the nation, and he was so highly respected that he could carry many in the community with him in opposition to encroachments on the Sabbath.'

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet,
moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house;
by the which he condemned the world,
and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”

Hebrews 11:7