

# The Explorer

May 2017

Free



Published by the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

## Subscription Details

The Explorer is published by the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) and is supplied free with the Witness magazine which is published monthly. The subscription rates for 2017 are:

U.K. £27.50  
Europe (Airmail) £30.00  
Overseas (Airmail) £35.00

Congregations ordering the Witness are encouraged to make bulk orders at the reduced rate of £24 per subscription per year. The Explorer, being free, may be ordered separately for Sabbath Schools.

Subscriptions and orders should be sent to:

Mrs Isobel McQueer  
The Manse  
Tordarroch  
Farr  
Inverness-shire  
IV2 6XF

Tel: 01808 521474

Email: [isobel@mcqueer.com](mailto:isobel@mcqueer.com)

## Puzzles

Young folk are encouraged to complete the various puzzles in the magazine and send them in to:

Miss Anne Macaulay  
30 Mackenzie Place  
Maryburgh  
IV7 8DY

Younger readers who find the questions too hard may like to do a drawing based on one of the articles and send it to the same address.

## Explorer Editor

Rev Murdo A N Macleod  
Free Church Manse  
Skeabost Bridge  
Isle of Skye  
IV51 9NP

Tel: 01470 532725

Email: [murdoanmacleod@gmail.com](mailto:murdoanmacleod@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.fccontinuing.org](http://www.fccontinuing.org)  
**Facebook:** [facebook.com/fccscot](https://www.facebook.com/fccscot)  
**Twitter:** [twitter.com/fccscot](https://twitter.com/fccscot)

## Printed by:

DM DESIGN & PRINT  
25 Loch Lann Road  
Inverness  
IV2 2HB

Design and layout: M A N Macleod  
Picture cover : [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)  
Picture page 3: [www.iclipart](http://www.iclipart)  
Picture pages 4-5: per R McCurley  
Pictures page 6: [ontheworldmap.com](http://ontheworldmap.com)  
and [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

Picture page 8: [www.i2.wp.com](http://www.i2.wp.com)  
[Unattributed articles ought not to be considered the work of the Editor.]

# Skipper's tales



## WHY DID SKIPPER LOOK SO GUILTY?

We recently bought two new chairs, one for me and one for dad. They are leather, and nice and shiny and new, so we don't want Skipper climbing on them and possibly scratching them, even though it is easier to get his hair off them than the other chairs. Anyway, Skipper has his own chair with a nice cover and even his own cushion which is bright red and has 'home sweet home' embroidered on it!

Perhaps you are thinking Skipper is a very fortunate dog, but he has to lie down somewhere and the chair he has is really an old one which just looks a bit better with the cover on it. Skipper will, of course, use any opportunity, especially when no one is looking, to lie full-out on the sofa and we are not very consistent at disciplining him, I'm afraid! Especially if he is fast asleep and looks cosy, as it seems a shame to disturb him!

Just the other day dad came down from the study and found Skipper standing at the door of the living room with his tail between his legs and a very guilty look on his face. He looked like the dog in the picture on the next page! What had he been up to? Yes, that's right, you guessed it – he'd hopped on one of the new chairs and lain down when he thought it was safe and no one would know! Just a wee feel of the chair revealed that it was still warm where he had been lying.

He KNEW it was wrong to lie in that chair. How did he know? He's just a dog; surely he doesn't understand right from wrong? Well, of course, at one level he doesn't know. He can't SIN as he doesn't have that relationship with God. He doesn't have a soul, which is what makes him different from mankind. So does he have a conscience? Well, I guess, in the sense that he doesn't like to offend us and knows when he has done something we won't like – he does. He has an awareness of our not being pleased when he does certain things.

Do you have a conscience? Do you know what that big word means? I am sure you know what sin is. Sin is when we do wrong

and we all know what that means. When we do wrong things we feel guilty, we know we have done something wrong and we don't want anyone else to know.

Sometimes, of course, we do something wrong and someone sees us or finds out and then we feel annoyed and embarrassed as well. We have been caught, we know it was wrong and we wish we hadn't done wrong in the first place. The way it makes us feel is not really worth it, is it? Conscience is that little voice in our head which usually tells us not to do something which we know is wrong.

Of course sometimes we do it anyway and then we feel more guilty because we knew we shouldn't have done it in the first place. So what is the difference between us and Skipper? Well, the Bible tells us we are made in the image of God and that when man was created he was perfect. Then Adam disobeyed God and sin came into the world. Sin is very serious because it separates us from God and leaves us guilty in his sight. However God had a plan and he sent his only begotten Son the Lord Jesus to die and pay the price for our sin so that if we believe in him we can be forgiven.

Skipper only offends us and he only does that very rarely, but we offend God every single day. So we have to go to him every day and ask him to teach us how to sin less and to forgive us when we offend him.



## From The Editor

Dear Friends

Some miles from our home, in the village of Uig, there is a holiday bunkhouse called the Cowshed. I have never been inside the Cowshed but outside on a spot high above the road they have put up a life-size model of a cow. Complete with horns and a fierce expression it looks very lifelike. So lifelike, in fact, that at first sight it had me fooled. It looks like a real cow but it isn't.

It may look like a cow but it will never have a calf and it will never provide a drop of milk. It is a fake. There is a lesson in all of this: things are not always what they seem. For example, we can look as though we are working hard when we are really wasting time. We can pretend to be doing what we are told, but secretly doing the very opposite.

More seriously still, we may look as though we love the Lord and are following him but we always have to be careful that it is for real. We have got to remember that whilst we can easily fool other people (and even ourselves), we can never fool God. Like the model cow, we may be very good at pretending, but he knows what is in our hearts.

The model cow always reminds me of the Golden Calf that Aaron and the Children of Israel made at Sinai. It was also a fake; a false god who could never help them or save them. It probably looked very impressive and it fooled them into worshipping it, but, it was as dead and lifeless as the model cow in Uig.

That particular cow is a warning for us to make sure that our trust really is in the Lord. This world is full of false gods which, like the golden calf, will lead us away from the one true God. That idol brought only trouble and sorrow to the Children of Israel and if we do not follow the Lord we too will find ourselves in trouble and sorrow. If you are ever in Uig try and spot the cow up on the hill and remember the lessons it teaches us about the difference between what is a fake and what is real.

*Murdo A N Macleod*



**Greenville Congregation**

## **Let's meet... The New Moderator**

### **1. Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. Could you tell us a little about your early years?**

At the time of my birth, my father was serving as a German linguist in US Army Intelligence and was stationed for four years in what was then West Germany. I was born in the Bavarian city of Augsburg, an important centre during the Protestant Reformation. After leaving the Army, my father went into the gospel ministry, and most of my earliest memories go back to growing up as a child of the manse. A gospel fragrance permeated the atmosphere of our home. I grew up with family worship, Sabbath observance and church attendance twice on the Sabbath and at least once midweek. My father also became increasingly more and more Reformed throughout my upbringing.

### **2. When did you become a Christian?**

Though I experienced some interest in spiritual things as a young child, I was not brought to a sincere and saving knowledge of Christ until the autumn of eleventh grade (age 17). I refer to the years prior to my conversion as a "decade of deadness." I was active at church and a participant in the spiritual exercises of our home, but my heart remained in a state of rebellion toward God. The sinful vanities of the world preoccupied all my interests and pursuits. While in that state, the Lord began to bring me into a deep conviction of sin. I can still picture in my mind's eye going to my father on one occasion and asking him in all sincerity whether it was possible for God to save anyone as sinful as me. The Lord, in the riches of his mercy, drove me from my foolish self-confidence and drew me to close with Christ in the gospel. Among other things, the Lord brought home forcibly the thought of Christ's righteousness being credited to the account of those who come to him by faith.

### **3. What led you to become a minister?**

The Lord produced radical changes in my life as a result of his work of grace in my soul. Old friends fell away and old activities ceased, as I was set aflame with zeal for Christ and his glory. I was captain of my lacrosse team at our large high-school (over 3000 students), and I used that position and others to raise a witness for Christ, including an attempt to start a Bible study for the first time in our school. I also began digging into books at this stage. My initial, first-hand exposure to the 19th century Free Church authors, as well as the Puritans and many other older writers, began in my late teens. My studies also led me to embrace infant baptism and Presbyterian church government, which differed from my family's practice. During my university-age years I joined a congregation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. It was during these years that the Lord laid on me an unshakeable sense of constraint to pursue the gospel ministry.

### **4. Some people might find it a little strange that a minister in the United States would apply to become a minister in a small Scottish denomination. How did that come about?**

After four years of seminary, I was ordained as a minister in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and served for five years as pastor of an OPC congregation on the Tennessee/Virginia border. As a result of my ongoing studies in the ministry, my convictions continued to develop and mature, leading me to biblical persuasions on several key matters that were different from the vast majority of my denomination (e.g., purity of worship, experimental religion/preaching, constitutional principles, etc.). I had been familiar with historic Free Church authors from my teens onward, and I had subscribed to both the Monthly Record and Free Church Foundations during the late 1990s. So I kept abreast of developments in Scotland during the period leading up to the 2000 division. Simultaneously, I became persuaded that North America needed a constitutionally sound Presbyterian church that maintained the biblical doctrine, worship, and government codified in the



The General Assembly is due to meet in May . The Moderate-Designate is Rev. Robert McCurley



The McCurley Family

Westminster Standards. In God's wonderful providence, an opportunity developed in Smiths Falls, and I was received into the Free Church (Continuing) in May 2002. I must say that I feel more at home in the Free Church (Continuing) than I possibly could anywhere else in the world.

**5. You now live in Greenville. Could you tell us a little about it?**

The State of South Carolina is located in the southeastern United States (part of the "old South"). Greenville is a city situated in the foothills region of the northern Upcountry. The Blue Ridge Mountains sit visibly perched thirty minutes to the north, while the Atlantic ocean forms the South Carolina coastline three and a half hours to the south. You can see a photograph of our mountains on our congregation's website. We have four seasons with a sunny, temperate climate. Those from Scotland would probably consider our summers too hot, though the other three seasons are mild. South Carolina forms part of what is called the "Bible Belt." This area was historically one of the most conservative parts of the country, though things have changed drastically in recent years. Many in our congregation live in towns around and outside the city of Greenville. The congregation also consists of many readers of the Explorer -- as those ages 0-18 years-old make up about half of the congregation.

**6. You often make the trip across the Atlantic. You must like visiting Scotland.**

I have been a minister in the Free Church (Continuing) for fifteen years now. In many ways, visiting Scotland is like visiting extended family. Though we are geographically isolated from the bulk of the denomination, we have a sense of strong ties to the brethren in Scotland. Scotland has beautiful scenery and rich history (both of which I greatly enjoy), but I especially prize the spiritual fellowship with the Lord's people during these trips.

**7. What are the main spiritual differences you have noticed between Scotland and your own country?**

It would be easier to speak about the spiritual condition of the U.S. than to compare it to Scotland. Both countries have rebelled against the crown rights of King Jesus and trampled under foot his Law. Both desperately stand in need of Spirit-wrought repentance. On the surface, the U.S. appears to be more socio-politically conservative, evidenced by a more overt Christian presence in public. But Christians who live here recognize this to be a thin veneer, devoid of real biblical substance. The two countries share many of the same spiritual challenges.

**8. Are you looking forward to the General Assembly?**

I always look forward to the General Assembly, though to be honest, I approach this particular occasion with fear and trepidation, due to my position as Moderator-Designate. Only love for the Lord, his Church, and my brethren could compel me to leave the comforts of sitting among the other commissioners. The Moderator, however, is merely a servant of the court, and I desire to help as I can. I would cherish the prayers of the Lord's people.

# A DOLL FOR THE BIG SISTER



Helen Roseveare was born in 1925. This may seem like a long time ago but she only died last year on the 7th of December 2016.

She was a Doctor in the Congo in Central Africa from 1953 to 1973. She helped to build a 250-bed hospital, with a maternity ward, and trained many doctors and nurses in the colleges that she founded. She was given the name of Mama Luka.

In 1964 there was a civil war and she was taken prisoner by rebel forces. She remained a prisoner for five months, enduring many, many awful beatings. When she was eventually released she left the Congo and headed back to England but God gave her the strength to return to the Congo in 1966 to assist in the rebuilding of the nation. She helped establish a new medical school and hospital, as the other hospital that she built had been destroyed. She served there until 1973.

One day when she was in a hospital a mother died so the nurses had to look after her very small baby. They went to get a hot-water-bottle to keep the baby warm but as they were filling it, it dropped and burst. They were now unsure how they would keep the baby warm. When Helen was talking to the children later on that day she told them the story of the baby with no mummy. One of the little girls who was called Ruth prayed and said to God "Can you send a hot-water-bottle for the baby and can you also send a little doll for her big sister so that she knows that Jesus loves her." That day they received their very first parcel from England and when they opened it they took out a few cardigans and jumpers for the children. Helen put her hand into the parcel and took out a hot-water-bottle; immediately Ruth said there must be a doll as well because if God sent the hot-water-bottle he would also have sent a doll for the older girl. Ruth was so excited that she ran and put her hand into the parcel and pulled out the doll and gave it to the little girl. The parcel had been sent weeks before but arrived on the very day that the baby needed it and that the girl had prayed. So God had put it into someone's mind to send this parcel even before Ruth had prayed. "For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." Matthew 6:8.

After leaving the Congo in 1973 Helen Roseveare wrote many books and toured the world telling everyone how God had looked after her and helped her to tell people in the Congo about Jesus.

# PUZZLE PAGE

P	R	A	Y	E	R
C	O	N	G	O	E
H	T	O	H	M	T
E	C	A	M	A	A
L	O	L	U	K	W
E	D	O	L	L	Y
N	R	U	T	H	A

Hot  
Water  
Bottle  
Dolly  
Doctor

Congo  
Helen  
Ruth  
Prayer

**Write the extra letters here to find out what name they gave to Helen Roseveare**

---

**Why do you think they called her this?**

---

"I'll go anywhere  
God wants me to,  
whatever the cost."

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**March entries**

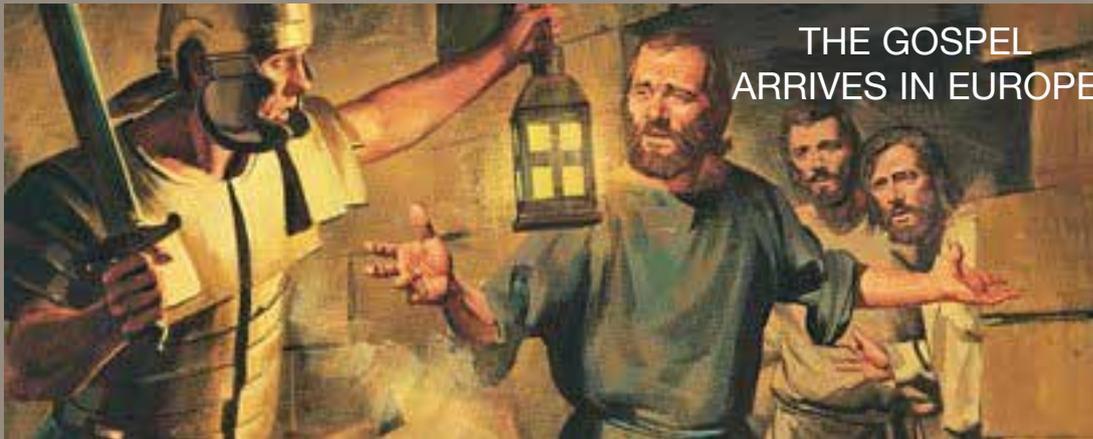
**1st Prize:-** Noah Richards  
**Runners Up:-**

**Cross:-** Hugh MacDonald, Murray MacDonald, Owen MacDonald

**Partick:-** Kenny MacKinnon

**Stornoway:-** Lily Craig, Sarah Craig, Thomas Craig

# THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES - CHAPTER 16



## THE HOLY SPIRIT DIVERTS PAUL (vv 1 - 12)

In this chapter, after the events of chapter 15 at Jerusalem, Paul sets off on a new missionary journey. He took with him a young convert called Timothy. It was not Paul's intention to go to Europe but the Holy Spirit stopped him going in another direction (vv 6 - 7) and Paul was turned to the north. The Holy Spirit also gave Paul a vision that he was to take the Gospel to Macedonia, a district in northern Greece. And so Paul crossed from Troas, in north-west modern Turkey and came to Europe. Luke, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, joined Paul at Troas and travelled with him. You notice the way in which "they" is used up until verse 10, when it changes to "we".

## LYDIA'S HEART OPENED BY THE LORD (vv 13 - 15)

They eventually arrived in the city of Philippi, the capital city of Macedonia. The Jews in Philippi, and there were only a few, used to meet by a river as they had washing ceremonies to perform. Paul went to speak to them about the Lord Jesus Christ. One woman, Lydia, believed the Gospel when she heard it. This was because the Lord opened her closed heart by his power. (v14) She was now a changed woman and because she had never been baptised she now received this privilege as a sign that she had become part of the visible Church of God in this world. The immediate sign of her conversion was hospitality. She now loved the Lord's people. (v 15)

Lydia's conversion was quietly done. It did not have the outward circumstances of the Jailor's conversion in the next section of this chapter, but both had the same inner work of the Spirit accompanying the Word as it was preached.

## SATAN CAST OUT BY A GREATER POWER (vv 16 - 24)

Paul then met a devil-possessed woman. She seemed to know the way of salvation but Satan prevented her from following it. Paul did not want his work to be associated with anything devilish and out of pity for the woman he delivered her from the evil spirit at work in her soul. Relying on the power of Jesus to command the evil spirit to come out of her. The spirit had no choice but to obey! We might not be in the same awful condition as this girl but only the Lord can bring any of us out of the slavery of Satan and the bondage of unbelief.

Satan's rage at what had happened was soon seen in the reaction of those wicked men who had been using the woman to make money. (v19) They arrested Paul and Silas and the city's magistrates put them in prison without a trial. This was illegal but such was the opposition to Christianity that these people didn't care!

## THE JAILOR SET FREE (vv 25 - 40)

Even in prison Paul and Silas were safe in Christ and sang praise, from the Psalms, to the Lord, who was present with them in prison. The other prisoners were probably amazed at this. Certainly no-one else was singing in the prison. The Lord sent an earthquake and great terror into the Jailor's heart. He came to understand that he had to be saved from the chains and prison of sin. In verse 31 we have the wonderful words of Paul as he freely offers Christ to this poor man. Again the Lord opens another heart to believe and receive the Gospel and just as before the first effect of conversion is hospitality - an overlooked mark of grace!

The magistrates having 'cooled down', realised they had broken the law and set the prisoners free. Alas, they did not accept that they had broken God's law and needed to be freed themselves. Christ is the only one who can set the sinner free from the guilt and power and punishment of sin. Pray to him. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed". (John 8:36)