

# The Explorer

April 2015

Published by the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

Free

## 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 2015 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:

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## Puzzles

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

Miss Anne Macaulay  
24 Ord Terrace  
Strathpeffer  
Ross-shire  
IV14 9DA

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.

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## Printed by:

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

Design and layout: M A N Macleod

Picture cover : [www.photo.com](http://www.photo.com)  
Picture page 3: [www.iclipart.com](http://www.iclipart.com)  
Picture page 4 -6: [www.photos.com](http://www.photos.com)  
Picture Page 7: [www.brentwood.gov.uk](http://www.brentwood.gov.uk)  
[Unattributed articles ought not to be considered the work of the Editor.]

# Skipper's tales



## WHEN SKIPPER MET EVA

Do you remember a long time ago I told you a story of Skipper running off with his friend Fudge? He was disobedient because he did not recognise the voice that was calling him. Well, he hasn't run off since, at least not till last week!

Now he is not the cleverest dog, it has to be said. He can easily jump over the garden fence and has done so a couple of times if one of us is walking down the road. He has great difficulty in understanding why we would go for a walk without him. If the gate is shut, however, he never ever jumps over the fence even when he sees his good friends, our next door neighbours; so he is always trusted to go out on his own into the garden.

Anyway, I went off to work very early one morning and dad told me not to bother getting out of the car to shut the gate as it was very frosty and cold. You can guess of course what happened. Dad forgot the gate was open and when Skipper wanted out for his usual morning romp around the garden he opened the back door and off went Skipper as usual. About half an hour later dad noticed that Skipper had not come bursting in the back door as he always does, letting in a blast of cold air! He looked out into the garden and realised the gate was wide open and there was no sign of Skipper. Well, a couple of times I have let Skipper out at night and forgotten the gate was open and he has usually only run up the road about a hundred yards and then come straight back again. Did I mention, he's a wee bit scared of the dark, as well as not being awfully clever! Dad was very worried, as there are a lot of lorries going up and down the main road not far from us at the moment and Skipper is not used to being on the road on his own without a lead or one of us with him. Of course, he could have gone the other way and found his way to the woods, but which way did he go?

Well, up and down the road went dad and then along the main road to the woods. He went into the woods and walked round and round shouting his name but of Skipper there was not a sign! Off he went up the road the other way, asking neighbours if they had seen him, but no one had. By this time Skipper had been missing for a couple of hours, so a phone call to the police and the

Animal Rescue Centre was made and still no word of Skipper. Now dad was really worried that someone might have taken Skipper home with them and do you know, that is exactly what had happened! Just when it seemed hopeless, the phone rang and the nice lady in the local shop told dad that Skipper was with her.

Dad was SO relieved and immediately made his way to the shop. Skipper had been picked up by two ladies who went into the shop and mentioned they were going to take him to the Police Station when the lady in the shop recognised him and took him into her house. What a relief! When dad arrived outside the shop there was Skipper on a lead, walking up and down with a nice new friend called Eva, whose granny owns the shop. I think Eva would have been very happy if her granny had not recognised whose dog he was as she was getting to know and like him and was enjoying being with him. Skipper seemed quite happy too and has made a new friend, though he slept all afternoon after a good feed. Dad too was exhausted; he had not rested until he found Skipper and had walked and walked looking and calling, but he was also very happy to have him home safe and couldn't wait to tell me when I got home. Needless to say the gate is now firmly shut every time anyone leaves no matter what the weather!

In Luke chapter 15 Jesus tells of how a shepherd who has a hundred sheep and loses one will search and search until he has found it. Ask a grown-up to help you to find it and read about the lost sheep. Jesus is the good shepherd who is calling lost sinners to repent and follow him.



## From The Editor

Dear Friends

I am sitting in the study and the usual peace and quiet has been broken by the noise of hammering. We have builders at work on the roof of the church. We had to get builders to come and do this work as we had water coming into the church and damaging the building. I think there is an important lesson here: this reminds us of our spiritual needs. The Bible tells us about sin and the damage it does. The water was coming in and rotting the wood and destroying the plaster. That is also how sin works. It destroys everything, ruining and spoiling more and more every single day. We needed workmen and our souls need a workman: the Lord himself, to come and work in our lives.

We could have saved some money if we had just asked the builders to replace some missing slates and not bother to put in new wood and other materials but we knew that if our problems with the roof were going to be solved we needed to get to the root of the problem. The same is true for our souls. We can make some changes in our life. We can begin to do less bad things and more good things but these are of no real value unless the root of the problem is dealt with. The root of all our problems is sin and Jesus says that we "must be born again". We need a new heart that loves what is good and hates what is bad. The power of sin must be broken and we must become "new creatures". When the workmen are finished our roof will have new materials and when the Christian is finally ready for glory they too will have been made entirely new by the Lord.

We are grateful for the workmen. We did not have the skills or the tools to do the work ourselves. We must avoid the temptation to try and do God's work. We need his power and wisdom to come and work in our souls. We will never be able to do that work. Look up Philippians chapter 2 and verse 13 and see what it says about this. If you are a Christian then you are "his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ephesians 2:10). If you are not then the work of renewing your soul has not yet started. Don't try and do it by yourself and don't put it off.

*Murdo A N Macleod*

# CHILDREN WHO SERVED GOD

## **Rhoda: The Girl who was Glad (Acts 12)**

The final article in our series concerns a very important subject. It is something which Christians cannot do without but sadly often neglect. Nothing could be more simple than what we have in mind and yet it can be so difficult. What are we talking about? We are talking about prayer.

In prayer we speak to God as our heavenly Father. We draw near to him in the name of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, with the help of the Holy Spirit. When we pray there are always sins to confess and blessings for which to give thanks but above all we make the desires of our hearts known: we ask a gracious God to grant the things that we and others need for this life and the life to come.

The Bible has a lot to tell us about prayer. In its pages we find men and women who called upon God and were heard in heaven. There is also a young person who can teach us something: a girl named Rhoda who lived at a time when the church was suffering but also growing.

### **Learning**

Rhoda, whose name means 'rose', was not from a Jewish background but she became a servant to a woman named Mary, a widow in Jerusalem who had a son named John Mark. They were followers of the Lord Jesus and as Rhoda lived with them she learned about God, sin and salvation in Christ. In those days the apostles were preaching the gospel with great boldness and facing fierce opposition. James was beheaded by king Herod who then had Peter imprisoned, intending to put him to death too. Peter was heavily guarded: no less than sixteen soldiers were keeping an eye on him!

Amazingly Peter was at peace. It would be natural for him to be fearful but the night before he was due to die, as he lay shackled by his wrists to two soldiers with others guarding the door, Peter was sound asleep (v.6)! Some might have cried for mercy, giving up their beliefs, but Peter, who had previously denied the Lord, was now firm in his faith.

Peter had something precious to hold on to. Before he ascended into heaven Jesus told Peter how he would die. In his old age Peter would be bound by his hands and taken to the place of execution (John 21:18,19). But Peter was still a young man so he could not die yet! Christ's words gave him every encouragement to seek God's help and every hope.

### **Pleading**

Peter was not alone in looking to the Lord in his time of need: the church prayed "without ceasing" for him. Gathering together where they could, the believers kept pleading for Peter's deliverance. Rhoda now knew the Lord and joined these gatherings. She loved to be at worship as God's Word was read and men led in prayer. One after another they stood up and cried to the Lord, pleading his promises in the Scriptures. In her heart Rhoda prayed too and would have said Amen.

As the believers continued praying late at night in Mary's house God sent an angel to the jail where Peter was held. Suddenly there was a light and the angel stirred Peter from his slumber. By a miracle his chains fell off and then the angel told him to dress and follow him out of the cell. For Peter it was like a dream. After they had gone past the sentries the prison gate opened, as if by a mighty, unseen hand. When they had gone down the first street the angel left Peter and he realised what had happened: the Lord had rescued him from a cruel death!

### **Rejoicing**

Peter went straight to Mary's house. When he knocked and called out it was Rhoda who went to see who could be there at such a time. When she recognised Peter's voice she was so overjoyed that she ran back to the others to tell them, leaving Peter outside! Yet they did not believe her and told her she was mad! Rhoda insisted it was true. The knocking did not stop so the believer's opened the door themselves and there to their astonishment stood Peter, alive and well!

In a wonderful way the Lord had answered their prayers. Rhoda had more faith in God than many others and she challenges us to fully trust the Lord when we come to his throne of grace. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14). May we always pray in such a way!



# PUZZLE PAGE

3	12	6		14	9	2	1	4	7	2
15	7	14	5	4	7	2			8	9
	1	12	9	6	4	7	10	13	11	
				1	14	5	2			

Fill in the letters already given then see if you can work out the remaining letters

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
W						R	

9	10	11	12	13	14	15
			O		A	P

Can you think of 3 other examples of this?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### February entries

**1st Prize:-** Felicity Macleod, Cross

**Runners Up:-**

**Knock & Point:-** Alexander Macleod

**Partick:-** Kenny Mackinnon, Mairi Mackinnon

**Snizort:-** Angus Nicolson

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# camps 2015

## **FCC Youth Camps return to Badaguish with both Senior and Junior Camps**

Come and enjoy the unique atmosphere of a whole week packed with Bible-study, quizzes, team-games, races, brilliant talks, personal projects and our best-kept secret of all - Joan's amazing puddings! Even the dorm inspections are hotly anticipated daily events. With the Junior now thoroughly established, girls and boys, from those starting Primary 7, up to those finishing Secondary 4, are welcome to join in.

With an abundance of activities around the site, we are never short of the best that Scotland's Cairngorm National Park has to offer: mountain-biking, rowing, canoeing, Landmark, High-Ropes, Football, Highland Games and even raft-building are just some of the activities that have been laid on in the past.

Led by Rev James MacInnes, and with Joan Macintosh returning as everyone's favourite cook, its sure to be another unforgettable year at Badaguish!

After an encouraging and successful first year in 2014, the Senior Camp is just getting into it's stride. Reflecting the maturity of the campers, the Senior Camp strikes a slightly more civilised pace - but with plenty of fun and activity too. With seniority comes the opportunity to branch out and try some different activities not possible with the larger group of the junior camp. A midnight walk through the woods was a certain hit last year! Evening talks are inspiring, challenging and thought-provoking, with last year's topic considering Modern Slavery from a Biblical point of view. With a comfortable and spacious forest lodge, great atmosphere and warm friendships, come and join us at Senior Camp 2015. Camp this year will be led by Rev Greg MacDonald.

For more information on either Junior or Senior camp, or booking forms, please contact Greg MacDonald, 01851810037 or [gregmacd@me.com](mailto:gregmacd@me.com). Or see the website for details at [freechurchcontinuing.org](http://freechurchcontinuing.org). Booking deadline is 15th of May.

# THE STORY OF WILLIAM HUNTER

In our puzzle page this month we learn about the opposition and persecution the church faced in the time of the Apostles. Sadly such persecution continues until the present and in the next few months we will have some articles about that. This month however I want to tell you about someone who suffered and died because of his love for the Lord many years ago. William Hunter was born in Brentwood in England, in the year 1536. William was only two years old when a very important change took place in the country. King Henry VIII ordered that the Bible, in English, would be available in every Parish Church. Up until then the Bible had been unknown to most folk as ordinary people were forbidden to read it by the Roman Catholic Church.

William would go along to the church with his brother Robert and together they would listen as God's Word was being read. He came, more and more, to love the Bible and he longed for the day when he would be able to read it for himself. In those days very few people could read and most children had very little chance to go to school. Conditions were slowly improving and William was able to take some lessons at which he did very well.

In order to find work he set off for London and became an apprentice silk weaver. He was living near St. Paul's Cathedral and he used to go there regularly and sometimes the preacher would be the godly Bishop Latimer. In 1553 however everything changed when Mary Tudor became Queen. She was determined to stop the Protestant



Reformation and William sensing danger left London and moved back home to Brentwood. No sooner had Mary become Queen than the old rules forbidding the reading of the Bible came back into force. William loved the Bible and he used to slip into the church to read it. One day a monk saw him and demanded to know what he was doing. William replied, "Sir, I am reading God's Word for my comfort". The monk reported William to the local magistrate and an order went out that he was to be arrested.

Rather than get his parents into trouble William handed himself in to the authorities. He was asked to promise never to read the Bible again. That was a promise he could not give. As a result he was sent to Fulham palace where he was kept a prisoner. The Roman Catholic Bishop liked the young man and made many attempts to get him to change his mind. None of them were successful, not even when he spent three days and nights outside in the stocks until he was blue with the cold.

Eventually they realised that William was never going to do what they wanted and the order was given that he would be burnt to death. It was all the more cruel that William was taken back home to Brentwood where his friends and family would be forced to witness this fearful

act. His poor parents were heartbroken but the night before he died he comforted them. He thanked them for caring for him as a child and for giving him the opportunity to learn to read. Above all else he thanked them for encouraging him to read the Bible and trust in the Lord as his Saviour.

The next day an old friend visited William. "The soldiers are coming, William! Are you not afraid?" asked the visitor. "They cannot part me from Christ so why should I fear them? I shall this day be in a happier home than they". The next day, March 26th 1555 William was led through the streets in which he had played as a child. After they arrived at the place where he was going to be put to death a letter was read from the Queen giving William one last chance. If he would do as he was told he would be pardoned. He stood firm. "If you value my soul, take away your pardons", he replied. The fire was lit and William, at the early age of nineteen passed into glory.

In the picture you can see the beautiful monument that stands in Brentwood High Street to remind passers-by of William, his love for the Bible and his stand against the errors of the Roman Catholic Church. What would you do if you were in his position? Do you love the Bible? Do you love the Lord?

# YOUTH WEEKEND AWAY FEBRUARY 2015

On a rather blustery weekend down on the east coast, the youth of our denomination met together once again in Arbroath for our weekend away. We were certainly blessed with good fellowship and were well fed from the Word of God. We were under the teaching of Rev. A. James MacInnes (Lochalsh and Strath FC(C)), kindly standing in at short notice for the Rev. Donald MacKinnon who, sadly, was not able to attend the weekend.



Our topic for the weekend was “Reading, trusting and applying the Bible”. The weekend began with dinner followed by the first of Mr MacInnes’ talks, where he focused on trusting the Bible. He highlighted the importance of trusting the Word of God before reading or applying it, stressing that every word and letter is inspired by God.

On the Saturday, after breakfast and worship, we gathered to hear Mr MacInnes’ second talk; on reading the Bible. This was an extremely helpful talk, he gave an abundance of practical advice on how to discipline ourselves to read the Word often, not just for morning and evening devotion but in other parts of our day when we may be more alert. He also touched on the differences in the various narratives in the Bible, and how to interpret such passages.

In the afternoon, after dinner and interesting group discussions, we had our usual free time. Some games were played, some went shopping and some of us islanders took in the novelty of a KFC! After dinner in the evening we had the third talk, on the final part of the topic, applying the Bible. In this talk Mr MacInnes spoke on what the Lord expects of us when we have read his Word, our call to obedience and faith and our duty to use whatever gifts he has given us to his glory. After some lovely fellowship on Saturday night we were very much looking forward to the Sabbath.



On Sabbath morning we had a short prayer meeting, followed by breakfast and worship. We then had a good sermon from John 14 verse 15, “If ye love me, keep my commandments”. Here Mr MacInnes dealt with subjects such as why we should love the Lord and the importance of the commandments not just in the **believer’s** life, but also in the world. After a fantastic dinner, we had a time of psalm singing and fellowship in the afternoon before getting ready for the evening service. He spoke from Jonah chapter 1, speaking of the fact Jonah was fast asleep, needing to be awakened and needing to be revived by God. As the Sabbath in Arbroath draws to a close, it’s always a bit sad when you feel the weekend is coming to an end but we did enjoy good fellowship with one another on the final night before parting ways again on the Monday morning.



It was a really good weekend, enjoyed by all. While the numbers weren’t as high as previous years, the Lord still saw fit to bless us greatly as a gathering; we had those from the central belt, from the Islands and even from Dublin. We have a covenant-keeping God who has promised to be where even the two or three gather in his name;~ our highest praise and thanks go to him for his kindness to us in these things, and we pray it is all to his glory. The preaching, the fellowship, the organisation and the food were all excellent and credit goes to all involved in making the weekend a success. We hope more youth will be encouraged to come along to the next one in October, the exact dates of which are yet to be confirmed.

Kevin N MacDonald