

# 'K&F'

## Kinloss & Findhorn Church News

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### March 2011



### From the Manse.....

Me and 'er-indoors' recently had the pleasure of visiting St. Andrews. The 'Home of Golf' for some, and to others an historic town and home to the oldest Scottish university founded in 1413. When we arrived, expectation and excitement was palpable. Could it be that the townsfolk were expecting the Minister and his good lady? I think you all know the answer to that! Sadly for us, a day too early to meet the Royals, we dodged the police sniffer dogs and the lifting of every manhole cover by the security Services! It is a sad indictment on the way of the world when such rigid and expensive precautions have to be taken before any Royal or major event. It was ever thus however, for even in the days of Jesus and his disciples, the rule of the Roman Empire helped ensure the safety and security of its people. The '**Pax Romana**' - Latin for Roman peace, was the long period of relative peace experienced by the Roman Empire in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. This was maintained of course by Roman soldiers throughout the Empire, not unlike the peace keeping duties that our military personnel have known in recent times. As we begin to think about the period known as Lent and the lead up to Easter, we could do no better than to pray for those who are called to serve their country in often difficult and dangerous times, whether in the Police Service or in our Military Services. Without them, our community and way of life would be subject to even more despots, criminality and insecurity. With them, "*Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. Thou shalt lie down and thy sleep shall be sweet!*" - Proverbs 3. v 23-24

Yours aye, Duncan

( Rev. Duncan Shaw – 4 Manse Road, Kinloss – 01309 690931 )

## Faith in Politics ?

POLITICIANS with religious beliefs should not have to leave their “consciences at the door” of Parliament, the former Prime Minister Gordon Brown said in a speech at Lambeth Palace last week. Mr Brown was speaking at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in a lecture, “Faith and Politics?” He questioned why there was a “conventional orthodoxy” today that religious belief should be kept at “arm’s length” in the public square, even though the involvement of faith groups in campaigns such as Make Poverty History was regarded as “uncontroversial” and “natural”. He acknowledged that there had been a huge change in the relationship between faith and politics in the past century in the UK, which had seen a rise in liberal secularism. But this “standard version of liberal secularism” needed to be rejected, “because it unfairly expects people of faith to leave their conscience at the entrance to the public square”. To ask politicians of faith to leave their religious beliefs “at the door of the House of Commons chamber, or of No. 10, and thus bring a diminished version of ourselves to the public square, is an ‘ask’ which should be as intolerable to the true liberal as it is to the true believer”. Mr Brown also criticised theocratic approaches to politics, when “politicians might claim divine authorisation of their decisions.” He said: “To claim or imply divine sanction for a political cause is wrong,” both politically and religiously, because “surely part of our faith is the knowledge that the mind of God is unknowable.” He also warned against an attitude of moral superiority by politicians of faith, which he believed was “a perversion of the religious idea itself” He criticised a recent trend in British politics in which religious views were deemed acceptable in the narrow area known as “conscience issues” such as abortion or euthanasia. Such a demarcation was “completely artificial”, he said. Mr Brown called for “rich faith politics” with “deliberation and democratic contestation of arguments”. Such a “pluralism of politics does not require each of us to abandon our values, only that we be prepared to subject them to scrutiny, and debate not just conclusions but assumptions.”

## Working together in faith ?

The Church finds itself living in an increasingly religious diverse nation. The landscape of our country is no longer solely dominated with the steeples and crosses of Christians Churches, but is peppered by the arches and domes of temples, synagogues, gurdwaras and mosques. As Christians we are having to adopt practical ways of encountering people from other faith backgrounds, whether neighbours, shop keepers, co-workers, relatives or friends. Christians are beginning to view them as unique opportunities to witness, love and ‘serve to the ends of the earth.’ (Acts 18)

# Christchurch Earthquake

THE Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Right Rev John Christie, has written an open letter to the victims of the New Zealand earthquake through the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church

“This email is a very inadequate way of expressing our concerns for all caught up in the earthquake in Christchurch. News and pictures are beginning to tell something of the damage which has been caused and the loss of life which has occurred. There is little that any of us can do - especially from this distance - except to say that all involved will be upheld in our prayers. We remember particularly the families who have been bereaved, as well as those who are injured; rescuers, medical staff, colleagues in ministry and everyone who is involved in the aftermath of this tragedy. Please accept the assurance of our prayers and thoughts.” Shalom

(John C Christie, Rt Rev John C Christie Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.)  
(Tuesday 22nd February 2011)

**We add our prayers to those who have relatives or friends there at this time.**

## **Guild announces new National Convener**

At the February meeting of the Church of Scotland Guild's National Executive committee, it was announced that Alison Angus, from Lochcarron and Skye, is to be the incoming national convener of the Guild. Alison trained as a teacher at Jordanhill College. She lived for many years in Aberdeen, and was ordained as an elder in Cults. Married with three daughters, Alison has an interest in hill walking and sailing, passing her interests in outdoor pursuits on to young people via her church youth work and Scripture Union. Commenting on her appointment, Alison said: “I am deeply touched and humbled by the trust being placed in me by the Guild and shall seek, with God's help, to serve it faithfully. “The Guild is an inspiration to all in the church and I feel greatly honoured and privileged to have been invited to serve it in this way.”

## **A Need to be saved ?**

Foreign ministers of the European Union released a statement this week condemning the persecution of Christians! At a meeting of the Conference of European Churches in Belgrade , the representatives agreed to send a letter to the EU's Representative for Foreign Affairs, Baroness Ashton, “asking that the issue of protection of religious freedom and Christian people in the world is tabled at the meeting of foreign ministers of the EU”.

Find the Bible books that have been hidden in the grid, then read a quotation from Matthew 7:7!

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

Acts	John	Philippians
Colossians	Jude	Revelation
Corinthians	Luke	Romans
Ephesians	Mark	Thessalonians
Galatians	Matthew	Timothy
Hebrews	Peter	Titus
James	Philemon	

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Along with those of Nairn and Forres, our own communities would be saddened by the untimely loss of Mr Brian Ross of Messrs Tom Ross Undertakers on 19<sup>th</sup> February. Brian was quite exceptional in the compassion and care that he showed to bereaved families and he will be sadly missed.

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**And Finally.....**

**The only exercise some people get is jumping to wrong conclusions, running down their friends, sidestepping responsibility and pushing their luck!**