

Principal's Letter

The Highland Theological College is now ten years old and there is much for which to thank God. We began on 1st August 1994 in a hut on the perimeter of the car park in Moray College in Elgin. We have been, since 1999, in our fine buildings in Dingwall. God has been good to us and blessed our work and we are looking forward to a special day of celebration and thanksgiving on Friday 1st October. During the day, there will be two special lectures by visiting guest professors. Professor Richard Gaffin will deliver the first John Murray lecture and Professor I. Howard Marshall will deliver the first F.F. Bruce lecture. In the evening, our annual meeting and graduation service will take place, and Dr Gaffin will preach. Full details of the day's events will be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

We are also delighted that the Board of Governors, at its last meeting, was able to approve a budget for this coming academic year. If our predicted figures prove to be accurate, then we should get through the year without a crisis! This, of course, is always dependent upon our donation income, which plays a significant part in our overall financial position. If you are a regular donor, then please continue to support us and if you are not, then please consider making a monthly donation to our work.

The UHI Millennium Institute has recently instituted a sabbatical study leave scheme. Hector Morrison, the Vice Principal, has just returned from sabbatical and, by the time you read this, I will have begun my sabbatical. The plan is to write a book on the doctrine of Scripture. With Noel Due's return to Australia and my sabbatical, we welcome two part-time lecturers to help us through this coming academic year. They are Dr Robert Shillaker, one of our recent PhD graduates, who will teach systematic theology in my place; and the Rev Richard Gibbons, Church of Scotland organiser for evangelism in the north of Scotland (and one of our Doctor of Ministry students) who will teach pastoral theology in place of Noel Due.

We are delighted at the number of students who have accepted places on our BA degree course for the coming year and we look forward to getting to know them and welcoming them into our worshipping, academic community. We have also decided to run a full-time version of our popular Access Course. This is a one year course with no entrance requirements and (for eligible students) no fees to pay. You may even receive a bursary! Why not come along and try it? We have places available on both our Access Course and our BA course. Contact the college for further information and ask for Ruth Craigie.

We are also delighted that successful accreditation arrangements have been agreed between UHI and the University of Aberdeen, so that this year we will be registering our MPhil and PhD students with Aberdeen. It is also our hope that a taught Master's degree (MTh) may be developed in the coming year.

This is only a taste of all that God is doing among us. Please join with us on Friday 1st October and let's make it a day to remember.

Professor A. T. B. McGowan.

10th Anniversary & College Graduation

Friday 1st October 2004 marks the 10th “birthday” of HTC. The occasion is being marked by the instigation of two lectureships: the John Murray Lecture and the F F Bruce Lecture. The John Murray Lecture will be given by Professor Richard Gaffin



Professor Marshall (left) and Professor Gaffin

of Westminster Theological Seminary at 11.00am. The FF Bruce Lecture will be given by Professor I Howard Marshall of Aberdeen University at 2.00pm. The Annual Meeting & College Graduation will begin at 7.00pm. The preacher will be Professor Gaffin.

All the above will take place in Castle Street Church of Scotland, Dingwall. Please come, and bring your friends!

PCA Moderator

All of us at HTC were delighted by the honour conferred recently on one of our trustees, the Rev Dr J Ligon Duncan III.

Dr Duncan was appointed Moderator of the 32nd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, which met this year in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from June 15th to 18th. Dr Duncan is the youngest minister to serve as Moderator. He is senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Mississippi, a congregation which has been very supportive of the College over the years.

HTC Principal Andrew McGowan and College Secretary Lewis Vernal were able to attend the Assembly with an HTC exhibition stand due to the kindness of another PCA congregation, Trinity Presbyterian, also in Jackson.

Volunteers

HTC has been helped greatly over the years by a fine body of volunteers, helping to maintain the rapid progress of the College in many vital ways. If you feel you might be able to offer help for a few hours or a day – for example in the garden, or the Library, or with photocopying – we would be delighted to hear from you!

Telephone 01349 780000

Or e-mail htc@uhi.ac.uk.

2004 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

The report of the Board of Ministry at the 2004 General Assembly (GA) of the Church of Scotland was very positive with respect to HTC and the role it, and other similar institutions, might well have in the future preparation of candidates for the ministry.

First, the report accepts that theological education received by individuals at HTC prior to their becoming candidates for Church of Scotland ministry will count towards the years of theological study required of them by the church's regulations. Second, the Convenor of the Board of Ministry made it clear that those who are already candidates in training can choose to do the earlier part of their theological education (which in some cases could amount to a full degree course) at colleges such as HTC. Third, the GA accepted that even the two 'core' years, focused around the present Church Colleges and central to the new proposals, 'could be achieved through the co-operation of institutions.' This could leave the way open for co-operation between HTC and one of the three Church Colleges. However, the report was an interim report awaiting the final report which is to be presented at the 2005 GA, with the result that any decisions made will not take effect until after the 2005 GA.

At long last, Church of Scotland candidates for the ministry from the Highlands and Islands are within reach of accessing ministerial training on their doorstep, should they so wish it. Surely, the 'national' Church will not draw back from this exciting new possibility for anew millennium and the era of 'church without walls'?

Enquiries and Donations to: HTC, High Street Dingwall, IV15 9HA +44 (0) 1349 780000

Highland Theological Trust is a registered charity: SC022838