# A Community of Faith and Scholarship

# HIGHLAND THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

# Newsletter Autumn/Winter 2010

#### 'Salvation has come'



Highland Theological College Recently I have preached on a number of occasions on the story of Zacchaeus from Luke 19:1-10, focusing in particular on the words of Jesus in verses 9-10: 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.' At the heart of Jesus' words in verse 9, there is an acknowledgement that a long anticipated event in Israel had in fact happened at last, for Jesus says: 'salvation has come'. This was a salvation that the prophets of old had often anticipated. For example, in Isaiah 46:13 we read God's promise: 'my salvation will not delay'; in 56:1: 'Soon my salvation will come'; and in 62:11: 'Behold, your salvation comes!' And for generations the godly remnant in Israel waited in eager expectation for the coming of this salvation until at last in Luke's gospel we read (Lk 2:25ff) of an old and godly man, Simeon, who was led by the Spirit of God into the Jerusalem temple at the very time when the parents of Jesus were there for the circumcision of Jesus. Remember the wonderful way in which Simeon took the child Jesus (v 28) in his arms and praised God, saying: 'Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation ... a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel'. Simeon recognised that in the person of Jesus, the longawaited salvation – the new era of salvation – had come, so he could die a happy man!

In the Christian church in general, and, not least in the work of HTC, we need to be reminded constantly of the centrality of salvation to all that we are to be about. We belong to the new era of salvation that began to break into this world with the advent of Christ. At HTC we need to keep reminding ourselves that 'salvation has come' and that we are to be about the task of producing heralds of this salvation and heralds of the King who brings this salvation with him as he moves from town to town, street to street and home to home. 'How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns"' (Isaiah 52:7), or, 'Behold your God' (Isaiah 40:9).

Central to this issue of the HTC newsletter is our 2010 Graduation at which we recognised the achievements of a number of our graduates who now move out to become heralds of the King who has come bringing salvation with him.

Below you will also find a brief report of Jamie Grant's attendance at the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation held this year in Cape Town, South Africa. Thanks to modern technology, HTC was also able to function as a GlobaLink centre in the Highlands, enabling local Christians to engage in some measure with the Cape Town event, through two special events held at HTC. How humbling it was to learn at these meetings of the work being done by Christians in India to free some of that country's 25 million slaves; or to hear of the importance of the proclamation of a full-orbed gospel in bringing about the work of reconciliation in Rwanda; and much more.

In any one semester HTC staff and students have the privilege of being addressed by a number of Christian workers from both home and abroad, each such contact enriching our appreciation of the wider work of the church in our own nation and across the world. This semester has been no different with input from, amongst others, several WEC missionaries, a congregational worker, a youth minister, and a probationer minister. Below you will see a brief report of a visit we were privileged to have from Rev James Lagos, auxiliary Bishop of the Church in Sudan.

In these and other ways we have been made aware again this semester, that 'the King has come, the King of love has come' and he has come bringing salvation with him. May the Lord enable each of us in our own way to be heralds of the King.

### **HTC at Grevfriars Free Church**

On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November staff at HTC took a series of meetings at Grevfriars Free Church in Inverness.

focusing on the theme of the 'Family of God', with particular attention being given to the Father-Child relationship that exists between God and his people. In the morning service, which was led by Jamie Grant, Hector Morrison spoke on the Father-Son relationship from Hosea 11. In the



evening both Innes Visagie and Jason Maston spoke, Innes preaching in narrative form from Isaiah 63, one of few places in the Old Testament where Israel called God 'Father'; while Jason spoke, mainly from Hebrews 12, on the 'heavenly Father's discipline' which, as he was at pains to point out, is a very much more positive concept than general English use of the word 'discipline' suggests. After the evening service the congregation was treated to a sumptuous supper laid on by the ladies of the congregation, and the day was finished off with Hector, at the invitation of the minister, Rev Dr Malcolm Maclean, a double graduate of HTC [BA (Hons) 1999; DMin 2001], saying a little about the work of HTC.

This was our first experience of doing a full Sunday with a congregation. On other occasions we have done teaching weekends or days, but we want to be as flexible as possible in serving the churches in a way that will be appropriate to their needs. If any other congregation is interested in doing something similar, please do get in touch and we will see what we can do to help.

### Sudan – Faith on Fire

It was a great privilege for staff and students at HTC to hear from an auxiliary bishop of the Church in Sudan, during a recent visit to the College along with Scottish representatives of AIM International.



The bishop sketched for us something of the background to the present situation in Sudan. He spoke of the Islamic coup that happened in 1989 and their subsequent plan to Islamise the nation, including the intention that by the year 2000 there would be no Christian churches left in the north of the country. In 1989 there were 16 Christian churches in Khartoum, the capital of the northern part of Sudan. These churches were bulldozed to the ground by the government but the Lord used that to bring about the growth of the church with the result that by 2000 there were 400 churches in the city! That is some church-growth strategy!

It was also fascinating to hear something of the religious background to the situation in Darfour, in the west of Sudan, where the Arab Muslims in the North had attacked the African Muslims. The Christian Church in the South came to the aid of the African Muslims. This show of practical Christian love moved many leaders of the African Muslims to decide that they wanted to follow the God of the Christians! The power of the witness of Christian love in action!

We sat in awed silence as the bishop spoke of the night they were due to be attacked by the local Muslims at 2am. They barricaded their homes as best they could and just cried out to the Lord to save them. The attack failed to materialise because at the very time for which it had been planned, the Lord sent a tremendous storm with torrential rain that lasted until dawn, with the result that no-one could move about outside. It was so humbling to hear from the lips of people who know what it is to experience such salvation in answer to their urgent, believing cries. We will long remember the bishop's visit, and will seek to pray for Sudan as it votes on 9<sup>th</sup> January regarding whether the South should secede from the North. Pray that the Father's will would be done and his name glorified.

### Cape Town 2010: The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation

In October some 4.500 church leaders from all over the world met in Cape Town, South Africa, to discuss the challenge of world mission. Each day consisted of a series of Bible readings, plenary discussions, seminars, workshops and small group discussions all focussed on the topic of how to take the Gospel of Christ to the world around us. Among the speakers were Chris Wright of the Langham Trust; well-known author and pastor, John Piper; Vaughan Roberts, Rector of St Ebbe's Anglican Church in Oxford and regular Keswick Convention speaker; and Tim Keller, Senior Pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York. One of the great privileges of the Congress was the opportunity to meet with people from a huge diversity of countries, cultures and church backgrounds. Some of the testimonies shared, both from the platform and in personal conversations, were quite remarkable, giving an insight into the incredible ways that God is at work throughout the world. It is important to keep praying that the fruits of Cape Town 2010 will continue to develop as new networks and partnerships come into being with the aim of spreading the good news of Jesus.

# **GRADUATION 2010**

The 2010 Graduation and Awards Ceremony was held in Dingwall Free Church on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September. The service was led by the Reverend Hector Morrison, Principal. Degrees were conferred by Mr James Fraser, Principal of UHI. The Reverend Alex Murray, Chairman of the Board of Governors of HTC preached.

#### **Certificate in Christian Theology**

*This award is given to those who complete the Access to Christian Theology programme in more than two years.* **Josephine Burgess, Margaret Grant, David Green** and **Michael Robertson** all studied by open learning. Unfortunately none were able to be present for the Graduation. Josephine, Margaret and Michael have commenced studying on the BA in Theological Studies programme through HTC.

# Access Certificate in Christian Theology

This award is given to those who complete the Access to Christian Theology programme within two years. Graham Horne is from Southampton, Alan Monk from Fife and Matthew Scott from Aberdeen. Naomi Nakahashi lived in Japan for many years before coming to Dingwall, where her maternal grandparents live. These four students all completed the Access as full-time on-campus students. Graham is now studying at the Scottish Baptist College with a view to becoming a Baptist pastor. Matthew, Alan and Naomi have all commenced studies on HTC's BA in Theological Studies programme. Six further Access students completed their studies by open learning. They are **Regan** and **Ryan King**, twin brothers from London, **Emmanuel Patterson** from Perth, **Michael Rapley** from Fort William, **Margaret Stanfield** from Nairn and **George Stone** from Drumnadrochit. The King twins, Emmanuel, Michael and Margaret have all progressed to further studies on the BA in Theological Studies programme.

### Certificate of Higher Education in Theological Studies

This award is given to those who complete the first year of Theological Studies at HE level.

**Donald MacLeod** from Stornoway, **Iain MacMillan** from Stornoway, **Adam Oellermann** from Girvan, **Jonathan Sherlock** from Dornoch and **Christy-Anne Surtees** from Kiltarlity were awarded the CertHE in Theological Studies. Donald and Iain studied with us to become Church of Scotland Readers. Adam intends to go into ministry in the Baptist Church and continues his studies at the Scotlish Baptist College.



#### **Bachelor of Arts in Theological Studies**

This award is given to those who complete three years of Theological Studies at HE level.

Two graduates received this award. **Robert Barlow** used to be a research scientist. Once he became convinced of God's call into full-time ministry, he did the final part of his theological studies through HTC. Since January Rob has been the Church of Scotland minister in the parishes of Kilarrow linked with Kildalton and Oa, on Islay. **Andrew Fothergill**, formerly a missionary pilot with the Mission Aviation Fellowship, is preparing for the Ministry of the Church of Scotland. At present he is doing his probationary year with the Church of Scotland in Urqhuart and Glenmoriston congregation.

# **Bachelor of Arts with Distinction in Theological Studies**

This award is given to those who complete three years of Theological Studies at HE level with an average of at least 70% in their final year modules.

**Kevin Gruer**, from Daviot, graduated with distinction. Prior to responding to the Lord's call on his life, he was running his own consultancy/project management company.

Kevin is now doing his probationary period for the ministry of the Church of Scotland in the parish of Nairn: St Ninians linked with Auldearn and Dalmore.

#### **Bachelor of Art with Honours in Theological Studies**

This award is given to those who complete four years of Theological Studies at HE level.

Five students received this award. **Emily Bunn** began her studies at HTC with the Access course before going on to the BA. Emily could not be present at Graduation as she is currently teaching English as a second language in Korea. **Ross Collins**, Belfast, researched for his dissertation 'The Psalmic View of 'Salvation': The Salvation language of Psalm 85'. Ross has been accepted as a ministerial candidate for the Presbyterian Church of Ireland and is completing his studies at Union Theological College, Belfast. **Stuart Farmes**, formerly from Durham but now in Fortrose, researched for his dissertation 'What is the

most effective way of communicating to children during the Children's Talk in Sunday service.' A candidate for the ministry of the Church of Scotland, Stuart is now doing his probationary period in the parish of Inverness: Hilton. **David Kirk**, originally from Wales but now living in South Uist, researched for his dissertation the subject 'Heaven Opened: Intertextuality and Meaning in John 1:51'. His academic work was highlighted in External Examiner reports this year as being of 'exceptionally high and publishable quality'. David graduated with First Class Honours. **Eileen Miller**, along with Emily, came through the Access Course then on to the BA programme. Last year Eileen and Emily were joint winners of the Endeavour Award.

From left: Eileen Miller, Ross Macaskill, Andrew Fothergill, Kevin Gruer, David Kirk, Stuart Farmes.

#### MTh Reformed Theology

**Ross Macaskill**, Inverness, graduated with a BA (Honours) in Theological Studies degree from HTC last year then returned to study for his MTh in Reformed Theology, which he gained with distinction. His dissertation topic was 'John Calvin and the Passion of God: It's all Greek to me?'. Ross has just completed his probationary year for Church of Scotland Ministry at the East Church, Inverness and is prayerfully considering a call to a parish in the north. **Low Teck Wah** is a minister in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He and his wife moved to Dingwall for a year so that he could study here full-time as an on-campus student. On completion of his studies he returned to his native Malaysia to help with the training of pastors in the Presbyterian Church there.

#### <u>PhD</u>

This year has been a very successful one for HTC as far as PhD completions are concerned. Following on three completions in the previous session, we have had four students who have successfully defended their PhD theses in this past year. Unfortunately, none was able to attend the Graduation.

**Cliff Boone** is an American who spent many years in Tanzania doing missionary work among the Sandawe people. **Ian Clark** was at one time Head of Shetland Islands Council, before going to work for BP. Now retired, he lives in Argyll. Cliff and Ian are amongst the last students to graduate from HTC through an arrangement with the University of Wales, Lampeter. **Jason Hood** is from Texas but now lives in Memphis with his wife and son. He currently serves as theological advisor for a number of

churches in the Memphis area. **Ian Hewitson** is originally from Scotland but has lived in America for many years where he has worked as a pastor in the Presbyterian Church of America. Jason and Ian were amongst our first students on HTC's PhD programme validated by Aberdeen University.

#### **Doctor of Ministry**

**Mark Dunn** is from Ireland. He studied Business and Management at the University of Ulster before commencing his training to become a minister. He has studied in Jerusalem University and in Union College, Belfast, where he won prizes in both Old Testament and Practical Theology. For his DMin dissertation he researched 'A Biblical, Historical and Theological Study of the Lord's Supper.' Mark is now the Teaching Elder in First Evangelical Presbyterian Church in East Liverpool, Ohio. **Richard Gibbons** lived and worshipped for many years in Inverness, when he was the regional adviser for Mission and Evangelism with the Church of Scotland Board of National Mission. At that time he was also a part-time tutor at HTC. He completed his DMin studies after moving to the USA, where he is now Senior Pastor in the PCUSA First Presbyterian Church in Greenville, South Carolina.

# ADDITIONAL AWARDS

HTC Student of the Year: David Kirk

HTC Endeavour Award: Eilidh Wilkinson, Orkney

# HTC Student of the Year

Free Church elder **David Kirk** completed his Theological Studies degree as a typical student of the prospective University of the Highlands and Islands – studying miles from his host college. He lives on South Uist with his wife and two children and travelled to the learning centre in Benbecula where he took

part in video-conferencing classes from HTC in Dingwall. David also made regular visits to HTC to attend classes on-campus and to spend time with his tutors and fellow students. As well as juggling full-time study with a busy family and church life, David is a director of The Caladh Trust which helps people in the Uists and Benbecula with alcohol and drug addictions and life issues.



David has been an A-grade student and graduated this year with First Class Honours. He has contributed widely to the student community and has always been enthusiastic, helpful and considerate, 'a good encourager and a great support for fellow students and staff'. He has represented UHI and HTC at various events, including school careers fairs in the Western Isles.

'My experience as a UHI student, able to continue living and working in the Uists, has been hugely positive. And I can't say enough about HTC – it is more than a college; a real community, and the people there are wonderful', said David. 'I want to formally express my gratitude to all the staff for their input over the last four years. It was very pleasing to gain a good degree, and an honour to win HTC Student of the Year, but it is the formative influence upon me, by example and teaching, of the staff there that is by far the most valuable thing to me. The College has become my *alma mater* under Christ for whatever path I will take in the future. I'm sure the Lord will continue to bless the work there and that He will use HTC in His mission to Scotland and the world.'

#### **Appreciative Students**

It was encouraging for the members of the HTC Board of Governors to receive at its June meeting the following communication from Kevin Gruer, the student representative on the Board:

'On behalf of all the students at HTC, I would like to express our gratitude to all the staff and the Management team at HTC. A particular thanks to the HTC Governors for giving their time voluntarily to oversee and take ultimate responsibility for the management of the College; a task which we know brings with it ongoing challenges and sacrifices for all involved. However, the result is that we students receive a high quality theological education which is both bible-based and delivered by Christian lecturers and tutors. And this without the need to leave the Highlands & Islands to study and, for many, without the need even to leave their own homes thanks to video-conferencing and distance learning. I think the number of Church of Scotland candidates who have chosen to study here in the few years since HTC has been approved by the CofS is one reflection of this, and for some it is what has made ministry training possible, as family circumstances meant studying away from home at one of the other Divinity Colleges was not feasible. And even in my three short years here, there have been beneficial improvements to the learning experience. So, there are tangible fruits to your labours. Be encouraged and keep up the good work in Christ's name.'

# **Student & Staff News**

**Donald MacLeod** and **Iain MacMillan** – CertHE (2010) – set apart by the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Lewis to the office of Readership at a service in Stornoway High Church on 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

**Donald Morrison** – BA student – has accepted a part-time position as emergent church development worker in the Condorrat-Coatbridge area, starting in the new year.

Scott Paton – BA (2009) – has finished his training for the Baptist College and is awaiting a call.

**Mike Robertson** – BA student – was on placement with Summit Community Church in Richmond Hill, Toronto, Canada, and later at summer camps with Carpathian Aid in Romania. He has recorded some of his experiences at <u>http://mikesfirstmission.blogspot.com/</u>.

Congratulations to **Scott McRoberts** – MTh student – and Heather on the birth of their first child, Anna Charis, on 16<sup>th</sup> September.

Congratulations to our former colleague - and adopted Scotsman - **Rev Dr Noel Due**, on his recent marriage to Dr Kirsten Buchanan, in Adelaide, South Australia. We pray that they may know the Father's blessing on their life together and his guidance for their future ministry.



**John Macrae** – Access Student. We were sorry to hear of John's sudden death at the end of August. John took on his Access Course studies to help him prepare himself more fully for what became a growing ministry of preaching in a number of denominations in the area of Skye and Lochalsh. John was tremendously supportive of the work of HTC and we will miss dearly his warm, enthusiastic and gracious presence at a variety of HTC events. We express our condolences to his widow, Agnes, and to his son Evander.

#### Jamie Grant at Dumisani

Jamie Grant, Vice Principal, spent the week prior to the Lausanne III Congress in King William's Town teaching at the Dumisani Bible Institute. Dumisani is, of course, headed up by Alistair Wilson, former tutor in New Testament at HTC. Jamie taught on the topic of 'Dealing with Difficult Psalms' where he examined the role of lament and imprecation in the life of the Church, as well as considering how to interpret the metaphorical language of poetic texts. The interaction with the students and staff at Dumisani was a real delight for Jamie and he returned to Scotland with a much clearer understanding of the vital importance of that ministry to the church in the Eastern Cape area of South Africa. It was also a great pleasure for Jamie to spend some time with Alistair and Jenny and the family who are all doing well despite the various challenges faced in their setting at the present time.

### Ben the Builder, could he fix it? Ben the Builder, yes he could!



We will be sorry to lose Ben Hauxwell (and his dog, Monty) as College Caretaker. Ben will move to Sweden in December to join his wife, Maria, who has been employed there since October, having been made redundant from her job here in Dingwall. Ben has done a power of work since joining HTC, not least renewing the box guttering and replacing the old and inefficient heating system in the rear building. Ben's replacement, Martin Sheringham, comes to us with a great set of skills; we see this very much as the Father's providential provision. We look forward to having Martin on board the staff team.

### **Support from Churches**

We have recently completed a review of the donations we have received from congregations over the past 11 years since the College moved to Dingwall in 1999. This has been a useful exercise which should help us as we seek to encourage more congregations to become involved in supporting HTC. The review has shown that there are almost 30 congregations or fellowships of God's people in Scotland – all of them in the Highlands and Islands – who support the College in any regular way (most of these once a year). In addition, there are about one hundred congregations who have given an occasional donation over these past 11 years.

I would like to enthuse HTC supporters to try to encourage their own congregation or fellowship to consider whether they could begin to support the College financially on an occasional or regular basis. Perhaps you could ask for HTC to be remembered as mission funds are disbursed at this time of the year? Or, perhaps you could suggest a retiring offering for the work of the College? If you would like a representative from the College to present something of the work of the College at your church, please get in touch with us through Marina.MacKenzie@htc.uhi.ac.uk.

#### **Bankers Order**

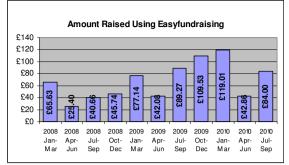
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r rienus of Highland Theological College, In	<b>c.</b> is a <b>501(c)3</b> public charity organised in 2007 solely to

receive donations from US taxpayers and distribute their funds to HTC in Scotland. Since FHTC handles all the record-keeping and oversight requirements imposed by the IRS on donations to foreign charities, they are also able to offer a tax-deduction to any individual who would like to donate to HTC. If you would care to become a 'Friend of HTC' by making a donation, please make the check payable to: 'Friends of Highland Theological College, Inc.' and send it to:

#### Friends of HTC Inc., P.O. Box 19614, Atlanta, GA 30325

In return, you will receive a letter-receipt confirming your donation.

# **Online shopping**



This has got to be one of the easiest ways to support us! If you're not already using Easyfundraising please do take a moment to register. It's quick, straightforward and free! Once registered, when you make a purchase from any of the online retailers HTC will automatically receive a donation. We can't trace who uses it or what they buy - all we do is receive a cheque each quarter. The more people registered and using the system the more we can raise. To date we've received over £700 this way.

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/highlandcoll

Christmas shopping, booking a holiday, renewing insurance, ordering cinema tickets, new books & CDs...







# **Dates for your Diaries**

Start of Semester2 Classes commence on Tuesday 1st February. Please contact Angela in the Academic Office for more details.

Access/BA Conference Day & Open Day Saturday 19th March. All students and visitors welcome.

# Leisure Classes at HTC

Levels 1A & 1B are ideal for Computing people with no knowledge of computing Levels 2-4 assume a limited whatsoever. knowledge. For more information tel: 01349 780000 (daytime) or 07768 972226 (evening) or email: jack.sutherland@htc.uhi.ac.uk

If you have an ILA account you may be able to do these classes for free! Ask Jack for more information





# **HTC Embroidered Clothing**

# Pull-over hoodies £12; Zip-front hoodies £12; Fleeces £14: Polo shirts £7 Black, navy, red, white, royal, grey.... Rugby shirts also available (not shown) - black only, £15 Please add £3 per order to cover postage & packing.

Contact Barbara MacPhail for more details.

- If your mailing details are incorrect please let us know.
- If you have an email address and are happy to receive communications by email instead of by post it could save us money.
- If you know of anyone else who would like to be kept informed of HTC's work please encourage them to send us their details so that we can mail or email them too.

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