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## A City Pastorate in Glasgow

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These unqualified recognitions of the importance of the Voluntary worker and the Voluntary organisations are reiterated in the Green Paper on the National Health Service which recommends re-structuring of the Health and Hospital Services. One whole chapter is devoted to "Local Participation" and its appreciation of the Voluntary worker can be assessed by the following quotations:—

"There is undoubtedly a much greater potential for the participation of Voluntary workers in the Health service than has been realised in the past and a much wider role for the work of voluntary organisations. There are many needs of the sick and handicapped which are better met by voluntary workers than by paid staff".

"The discussions following the publication of the first Green Paper have shown that the voluntary organisations are ready to take a fresh look at their activities and to see how they need to be adapted to work alongside an integrated service".

"Grants and subsidies paid by the area health authority—either from its approved allocation of finance or, where appropriate, from trust and endowment funds—will be available to support voluntary bodies which provide and promote services with the general scope of the authority's responsibilities".

"Voluntary effort may also be needed to enable relatives and friends to visit when distance or disability makes this impossible without special help. The greater the participation of the local community in its local health services, the greater the response of the service to the community's needs and of the community to the service's needs. Voluntary work can be an important source for the recruitment of paid staff".

In view of this official recognition of the need and value of voluntary workers it would seem that the appearance of the Aves Report in December last year, with its comprehensive survey of the role of Voluntary Organisations and 'Volunteers' in the life of our nation, was most opportune. It recommends, among other things, that Councils of Social Service or some other similar bodies should establish Voluntary Workers Bureaux (for the recruitment and placing of voluntary workers), and the setting up of Joint Committees for the training of Voluntary Workers (to promote and co-ordinate preparation and training).

The writer, as Organizing Secretary of the Exeter Diocesan Council for Family and Social Welfare, is now very much involved in pioneering the setting up of a Joint Committee in co-operation with the Devon Councils of Social Service, Children's, Welfare and Health Departments, the Sociology Department of Exeter University and Educational Authorities, with a view to recruiting more voluntary workers from churches of all traditions in Devon, and initiating a Steering Committee to co-ordinate Training plans.

Is this genuine search for voluntary workers an answer to a question often asked by Ministers and Clergy, "What kind of Social Service should we encourage our people to be involved in?". Is this one of the ways in which God is making a Macedonian call to Christians, who claim to be members of

Caring Communities, to be much more involved in community life? Is God, in His wisdom, using the theological emphasis on the Servant Church, the ecclesiastical plea for restructuring, the young Christians' impatience for ecumenical action, and the overall concern about Mission, and calling us all to venture Abraham like, into a new era of Social Service, presenting us all with new opportunities for pioneering and service?

Abbe Couterier, the pioneer of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, was convinced that 'as we pray together we stay together', but it is not so well known that he was equally sure that 'as we work together we grow together'. It could well be that this general Macedonian call for voluntary workers is an indirect way of promoting closer co-operation between the Churches, thus helping us to know each other better as we work together in service.

Lord Radcliffe Maud addressing a National Conference of Voluntary Workers recently, said, concerning the new Social Service Departments:—

"We must take the chance that the new structure offers and make the most of it, whether as members of the new authorities or as professionals employed by them, or as their indispensable critics . . . This will mean restructuring the Voluntary movement to match new statutory patterns and building in new flexibilities so that the movement keeps pace with the increasing rate of social and economic change".

Is it asking too much to suggest that churches also should "take the chance that the new structure offers", and build into their life "new flexibilities" and at the same time think seriously about restructuring for service?

W. T. COWLAN

## A CITY PASTORATE IN GLASGOW

When God shut the door in China and opened it in Glasgow, I little thought He was giving me (age 54) a new ministry of 16 years. This tough and exhilarating task can be recorded in four stages of growth.

1. *A NEW BEGINNING.* (October '52—December '53)  
A new beginning it certainly was, for minister and church. The sudden termination of 28 years service in China was a shattering blow, and it was with sad hearts we parted from our friends and came to this new mission field. But my wife and I were buoyed up by God's call and His promise, "*I will do a new thing.*"

Adelaide Place Church, this Victorian "Greek Temple" seating 1000 people situated in the centre of Glasgow and surrounded by a sea of offices, shops and car-parks, had become a 'problem church' whose future was being considered by a

committee of church and Baptist Union. I knew nothing about this, only that God had sent me here.

So we came together in 1952 for God to work out His purpose through us. The life of this down-town church was indeed at a low ebb. Nevertheless, God, the God of the Resurrection, was here in the faithful minority who were praying for revival. Here was a situation which called for the application of missionary principles, the first being "*Move men, through God, by prayer alone.*" The Wednesday evening Prayer-meeting became the power centre of a revitalised fellowship, with the Living Christ in control directing the advance along lines of united prayer, Bible instruction, real evangelism and missionary outreach.

This new life appearing needed *training for God's army* (second missionary principle). Communist China had shown me that only a church built on Christ, fed on His Word and fortified by His Spirit can conquer the onslaught of militant atheism. This meant systematic Bible teaching on Sunday mornings and evenings, at the week-night fellowship meeting and at the Minister's Bible-class for young people. My method was to plan each year's preaching from the books of the Bible during the latter part of our annual month's holiday in the Highlands. This enabled me to put the sermon subjects and scriptural references in each month's church magazine so that preacher and hearer could prepare together to receive God's Message.

This Bible teaching ministry attracted some new worshippers, but caused 17 members to transfer their membership to other churches. The reasons, they told me, were—I was changing this historic church into a "mission", I was making it a "fundamental" church, I was preaching as if they were "Chinese heathen who needed to be converted". I was disturbed by this, and felt sad to see these old members leaving. It was true. All my life I had been preaching to non-Christians, and now I had not adjusted myself to preaching the Gospel to Christians. We must reach the non-Christians.

This was done by applying the third missionary principle—"*Go to all people*". Praying together burdened us with Christ's zeal to go out and tell the Good News to every person in this city centre. A plan of House-to-House visitation evangelism, based on Luke chapter 10, was passed by the Deacons and the Church meeting. After 9 months' preparation, it was put into action in an area of half-a-mile radius round the church. The 2 weeks' evening visitation of the overcrowded tenement flats was an exciting experience for the 45 volunteers. We discovered that instead of "no people", there were 7000 people on electoral lists living here, and that one-third of these had no church connection. These became our responsibility, the burden of our prayers to lead them to Christ.

The results of this mission were disappointing. No new people joined the church, though we welcomed new children to the Sunday-school. Why so little fruit? We considered the question in prayer together and learned an important lesson—that it is not the initial but the repeated visitation that bears fruit. The work begun must be continued.

## 2. *AN EVANGELISING FELLOWSHIP* (January '54—December '58)

This apostolic practice of "going again and visiting our brethren" became the normal activity each year of seventy lay evangelists. This created a bond of loving friendship with our neighbours. We were no longer an island, but part of the life of a great city, serving the community—visiting the sick and those in Barlinnie prison, shopping for the aged, helping cramped families to secure ampler housing and fighting some of the social evils that were killing them.

Behind this practical evangelism was a powerful support of intercessory prayer and Bible inspiration, which was reviving the spiritual lives of us all and firing us with the passion to offer all men the New Life in Christ. It was producing new activities—Street fishing, increased Sunday school, Young People's Fellowship, Girls' Guildry, Boys' Club, the whole congregation was growing together into the maturity of the Body of Christ. The secretary reported at the 4th Anniversary Social that 100 new members had been added to the church.

We were further humbled and encouraged by God's using of our church and its trained lay evangelists in the "Glasgow Central Churches Campaign." Had you dropped into Adelaide Place Church Hall any night in the Spring of 1958 you would have seen strange things: doors open and lights on all night, hall full of desperately needy folk from the streets, pubs and coffee stalls, all drinking tea and talking with members of the team. Amazed and perplexed you may have asked, "What does this mean?" and you would have learned "This is the activity of the Living Christ through the members of His United Church."

How did it begin? The Rev. Tom Allan, my dear friend who had spoken such a welcoming word at my Induction Service, had been appointed to the Central Church in Glasgow. We both felt increasingly the burden of Glasgow's crying need for the Gospel of Christ and gave ourselves afresh to prayer for God's leading. The result was that the ministers of the eight central churches (3 Presbyterian, 2 Congregational, 2 Baptist and 1 Methodist) were drawn together in prayer and Bible-study for a year. We were led to invite Scotland's veteran evangelist, Rev. Dr. D. P. Thomson to come and lead a 3 year's Rescue mission.

"D.P." came, and like Montgomery trained an army of 270 tough Christian commandos ready to do whatever the King commanded. In the Spring these 70 ministers and 200 lay men and women "went over the top" in an all-out day and night advance—visiting 7000 homes and business offices and factories, with lunch-hour services; after tea visiting the 95 pubs and dance-halls in this central area. After refreshments, at 11 o'clock out we went for the all night work at the coffee stalls. We unearthed a situation few Glaswegians knew existed. Around the stalls were 300 men and women: the men—criminals planning their work, the women—prostitutes. With our 'Tell Scotland' armbands we mixed and talked freely. Conversations were interrupted by angry shouts as a fight flared up. A man crashed against a wall as a bottle smashed on his

head. The police stepped in and order was restored. Many came back with us to the church hall.

The Press glamourised this aspect of our work. But, believe me, there is no glamour here. In this square mile of concentrated vice there is an air of depravity—squalid, brutal and heart-breaking to a Christian. This is one of Glasgow's dark spots, and it was here that Christ led us to be with Him rescuing the perishing. "God must have sent you here to save me", said a young prodigal. "I never knew anyone loved me like this"? said "Dot" the teenager prostitute as she poured out her sad story and came later to trust in Christ.

The culmination of this great mission is the Rehabilitation Home in central Glasgow dedicated to the adored memory of Tom Allan who burnt his life out for Christ and died age 46 saving others.

### 3. *A MISSIONARY MOVEMENT* (January '59—July '61)

Another sign of Christ's transforming Presence in our midst was the changing of the congregation's outlook from the traditional and parochial to a realistic, world outlook. Our membership was becoming international by the increase of overseas worshippers.

One of the happy features of our congregational life was the fellowship it was providing for Asian and African friends. A dozen or more were regular attenders. Paul Olaoye from Nigeria sang in the choir. On Commonwealth Sunday the whole morning Service was finely led by African and Indian Christians. We were enriched by their lively and joyous faith.

I had the thrill of baptising and receiving into membership Chinese, Indian and African friends, and of marrying others, and dedicating their lovely children. One of many good things about Glasgow is that in its large coloured population I have not met any race discrimination.

My wife and I introduced a new feature which became a popular annual event the "International Evening". Its aim was to learn something about the people in other nations.

First, of course, came China. With our Chinese scrolls, pictures and dresses, together with Chinese students to give songs, music and talks, it was acclaimed as a great success. Each year other nations from Asia, Europe and Africa were set before us by their nationals and with the help of excellent posters from Travel agencies and Consuls. International songs were sung and a happy meal enjoyed by all as we closed by saying the Lord's Prayer in our own language. We became conscious of our oneness in Christ's World Church.

But the greatest honour God gave us during our ministry was the upsurge of missionary zeal by which He called 32 of our young people and sent them forth as His ambassadors into His home and overseas service. Our daughter went to India as a doctor under the B.M.S. Our second daughter with a fellow nurse went to serve in the hospital in Nazareth. Then followed a succession of dedicated young people—doctors and nurses, teachers and technicians, preachers and industrial



### ROBERT DENHOLM HOUSE, NUTFIELD, REDHILL, SURREY.

**Notes and News:** on this page we hope to bring you information concerning our various publications, which we believe you will find of interest. The following books are amongst those which have recently been added to our list. **Dr. Kenneth Greet**, who is the incoming Secretary of the Methodist Conference, has written a book, on the highly controversial subject of Sunday observance entitled '**THE SUNDAY QUESTION**'. Sunday observance is something which increasingly affects churches, Sunday-schools and youth movements. Dr. Greet examines the ways Sunday has been observed down the centuries, weighs up present day trends and points the way to answering the questions involved. This is published at 45p (9/-). The newspaper is one of the main means of transmitting, and commenting on, news and in his new book '**FAITH AND AN EVENING PAPER**' **Fred Milson** takes an evening paper as a starting point and from this there emerges various themes—children; young people; the changing role of women; marriage and divorce; senior citizens; immigrants; living in a city; advertising; politics; participation and protest; death—a most stimulating book. This is published at 50p (10/-). **Ronald Glithero's** new book '**DISCOVERING JESUS**' has been written with the younger teenager in mind but will be of interest to older folk as well. The author looks closely at the attitudes and reactions to Jesus, of those who actually knew Him so that readers may form their own opinion. This is price 40p (8/-). The author is head of the Religious Studies Department, Westminster College, Oxford. **Brian Brown's** two books **MAKING SENSE OF LIVING** and **MAKING SENSE OF LOVING** were very well received and he has now written two workbooks for young teenagers. '**THE CHOICE**' is an enquiry into how Jesus responded to the questions raised by the occupation of Palestine by the Romans . . . and His attitude towards those who wanted to make Him leader of the resistance. '**THE SEARCH**' will enable young people to investigate the evidence—using non-Christian historians as well as the New Testament—concerning Jesus, whether He is real or imaginary. Both books are price 30p (6/-) each. The latest in the 'Working With' series is **WORKING WITH SEVENS TO THIRTEENS** in week day groups. Leaders of mid-week activities will find this a storehouse of ideas etc. (Price 50p (10/-), and the latest in the 'Praying With' series is **PRAYING WITH ADULTS**. This is published at 40p (8/-). NCEC publications may be obtained through a local book-seller or direct from '**Robert Denholm House**'. Orders sent direct should include 1d. in the 1/- towards post and packing. More news next issue—with every good wish for 1971.

KEITH M. CRANE  
Sales Promotion

missionaries—going to 8 different countries and to churches in Britain.

This high privilege of partnership with Christ in His world missionary enterprise revolutionised the life and work of the church, making it more efficient and streamlined in its divine mission to Glasgow and the world. It also kindled the fire of intercession for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom on earth. In the Prayer hall was erected a large up-to-date map of the world surrounded by portraits of our missionary members with arrows showing their locations. The monthly flow of letters with missionaries' requests for prayer made the Prayer meeting more significant for each member, as the congregation joined in giving to God's great Cause their prayers, their money, and their lives.

Another opportunity for outreach was given to us through the B.B.C. inviting us on eight occasions to broadcast the Gospel to the nation. Yet another in the Glasgow *Evening Times* inviting us to write Christian Messages to the people for twelve years. So was the Gospel openly proclaimed to the world.

#### 4. TESTING TIMES AND A SPIRITUAL BREAK-THROUGH (September '62—Oct. '68)

No ministry is without its trials. There come times when the way is dark, problems are many and our spirits grow weary. The Tempter seeks to destroy us by despair, doubt, disobedience and escape from circumstances. The occasion was the "scrap and build" fever which had seized changing Glasgow, as hotels, tenements and churches disappeared in dust, and multi-storey flats, colleges, hostels and office blocks took their place. Speculators offered big prices for city sites. Should we sell and rebuild? We submitted to the Baptist Union a proposal to unite College, Church and Headquarters in one modern block on this strategic site. This was not accepted. Uncertainty about the future produced a spirit of defeatism. Could we afford the rising costs of maintaining so large a building? I thought of resigning, but God rebuked my cowardice. I must stay with my people and overcome these difficult problems together.

What problems? Problems of lively persons with different social and educational backgrounds and Biblical emphases growing together into Christ's Body; problems of maintaining the evangelistic edge while building people up in the Faith and helping them to see the implications of full commitment to Christ; problems of carrying deacons and the church with you in new ventures; problems of good relations with other churches in the area; problems of being a spiritual leader and at the same time encouraging and training others to be leaders; problems of knowing when to fight and when to wait, when to press on and when to "run with patience". These all seem to be concentrated in this crisis of uncertainty about the way ahead. Maybe, after finishing a hectic year's Presidential duties all over the country, minister and people had got a bit out of touch and were at cross purposes about what to do. I made mistakes by hasty speech and aggressive attitudes, and my over-busyness had led to neglect of pastoral caring for

my people. This displacement of Christ by an imperious self was remedied by His Cross. After a frank and friendly meeting with our twenty deacons we made a new start by a fresh commitment of our lives to Christ. At a united Communion Service on the following Sunday the whole congregation dedicated their lives to the continuing of the evangelical witness of Christ's Church in this city centre. In October 1964, we began a new venture—the All-age Bible School—which met from 10 to 11 a.m. each Sunday with a membership of 85 students ages ranging from 3 to 83! The group leaders were deacons and members while the minister and his wife were students in different classes. This met the need for closer fellowship of members and deeper knowledge of the Word of God and of the basic doctrines of the Faith.

This renewal of the congregation's spiritual life prepared the way for God to work in reviving power during the last four years of my ministry. "Our Church's Mission in the New Glasgow" was the theme of the Deacons' annual conference with the Corporation's Planning Officer present to give us a picture of our future role in the Glasgow of the Seventies. The surveyors reported the fabric of the church to be good for fifty years! Our church treasurer announced the finances to be once again in a healthy state. But best of all the visitation missions were bearing fruit as never before.

The spiritual 'break-through' came in the summer of 1967, as the Holy Spirit began to work quietly in convicting and converting power. It was awe-inspiring to meet people who came to the vestry moved by the Spirit through the Word preached—a school-girl, a university student, an engineer, a teacher, a house-wife, an office worker . . . saying they wanted to be a Christian. Who will ever forget the five mighty baptismal services and the solemn Communion services when the Living Christ was vividly present welcoming these 25 new members into the fellowship of His Church. Never in my ministry have I seen such a spontaneous movement of the Spirit of God. The reason? The veteran Rev. Alex Clark wrote, "Prevailing prayer has been the secret here as in the heroic days in China".

The last Sunday in June was the crowning joy of our lives as my wife and I sat in the pew and praised God with tears of joy as we saw and heard fifteen of the new recruits conducting the Youth Service. There were the Chinese Tan Hong Seow from Singapore with his fellow graduate Donald (both had just gained B.Sc. with first class honours), Kenny the Rolls-Royce engineer and converted dance-band leader with his group singers—David, Billy, Audrey, Yvonne, Rosemary, Martha and Heather, with Alistair, Gordon and Colin—all contributing in song, music, Scripture reading, prayer and testimony to the marvellous power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To see the Exalted Christ living in the centre of this keen, talented and dedicated band of young people and in this loyal and active congregation of God's people was my "nunc dimittis", for now "mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" in central Glasgow. And to God alone be the glory.

GEORGE YOUNG