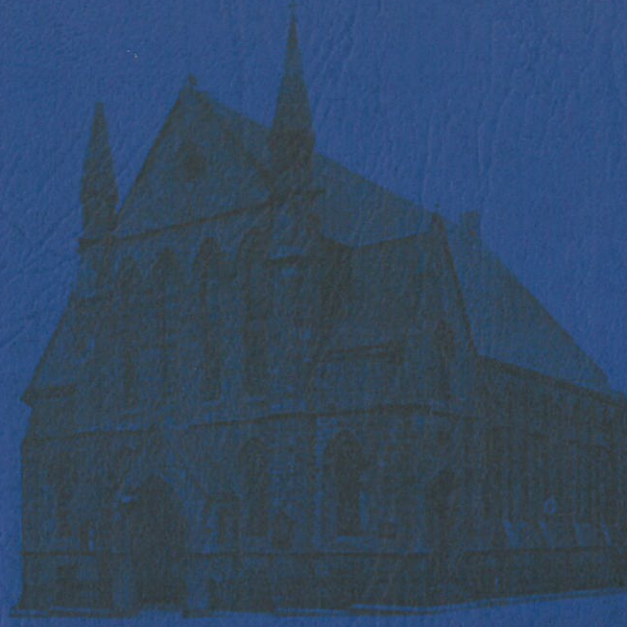


***“FIVE INTO ONE”***



*A Short History of the Congregations that Formed*

*Dowanvale Free Church of Scotland*

*Elizabeth MacPhie*

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## Foreword

Following the Secession from the Free Church of Scotland in January 2000, three congregations in Glasgow, namely, Briton Street, Drumchapel and Partick Highland, linked to form the new congregation of Dowanvale Free Church of Scotland. I thought it would be an interesting exercise to go back and find out a bit more about the history of these congregations and in the case of Briton Street the history of the congregations that made up that relatively new one i.e. the Duke Street/Grant Street Congregation and the Govan Congregation. This booklet is the result of my searching and I hope it may be of some interest to those who belonged to the different congregations.

My thanks go to the many who helped in various ways. Also to the office staff in The Free Church College who arranged for me to spend time going back through the old copies of the Monthly Record and Instructor, and for permission to use this information. I also acknowledge the information received from Dr. I.R. MacDonald's book "Glasgow's Gaelic Churches", Rev. Kenneth MacRae's Diary, the Historical Dictionary to Glasgow Presbytery by Rev. A. Heron, William Greenhorne's book "History of Partick" and Rev. Murdo Macaulay's book "Free Church Ministers in Lewis (Presbytery)".

My special thanks go to Miss Sarah Macaskill (Dr. Sarah) who checked through my drafts, provided interesting information on 'Old Duke Street Days', and also helped with suggestions for the title.

*Elizabeth MacPhie*



- Part 1**                      **Duke Street Gaelic Free Church/ Grant Street**
- Part 2**                      **St. Columba Gaelic Free Church Govan**
- Part 3**                      **Briton Street Free Church**
- Part 4**                      **Drumchapel Free Church**
- Part 5**                      **Partick Highland Free Church**
- Part 6**                      **Dowanvale Free Church**



*Part 1*

*Duke Street Gaelic Free Church*



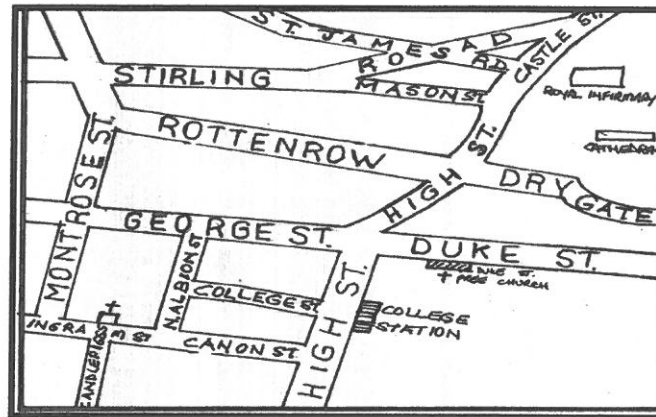


## DUKE STREET GAELIC FREE CHURCH

Just when Gaelic - speaking Highlanders first began to gather in the Lowland towns is not really known as there was no census taken showing the numbers but by the late seventeenth century a reasonably sized community had been established in Glasgow. In 1722 the number of Gaelic speakers may not have been more than 1000 but by 1798 it was estimated there were several thousand Highlanders in the city. The numbers kept growing and by the middle of the nineteenth century the Free Church Highland Committee estimated Glasgow's Gaelic Community at 45,000.

In the early years the spiritual needs of the Gaelic speaking population were met through Gaelic speaking ministers in parish churches but after the death of Rev. John MacLaurin, Ramshorn Parish Church, in 1754, the pastoral care of the Highlanders was taken over by the Glasgow Highland Society who undertook the erection of a Gaelic Chapel. The Ingram Street Gaelic Chapel was opened in February 1770.

Because of the rapid increase in Glasgow's Gaelic population it was claimed that the existing Gaelic Chapel 'could not hold half the people' and a petition was put forward for a second Gaelic Chapel although the obstacles at first seemed formidable. Raising the funds required was reasonably straight forward as was the obtaining of a building site. What was more of a problem was getting the agreement of Presbytery and Assembly as without this it would not be possible for a minister of the established church to be inducted. The petition went to the Presbytery in March 1798 stating that the Ingram Street Gaelic Chapel was too small. Six hundred subscribers had pledged to meet half the cost of the new building estimated at £1400. The Presbytery deferred a decision but the Assembly gave its approval and Duke Street Gaelic Chapel came into being. The building was erected on the south side of Duke Street near the junction with High Street.



### DUKE STREET GAELIC CHAPEL GLASGOW 1885

The first minister, Rev John MacKenzie, was inducted in October 1798, having formerly been the minister in Aberdeen Gaelic Chapel. It is interesting to note that of the two Gaelic Chapels Duke Street was the larger with 1263 sittings as opposed to 1090 in Ingram Street.

In its first Kirk Session the Congregation had one manufacturer (John Macintosh) and one merchant (Daniel McKellar) but the remainder of the Office Bearers were all from the artisan class and reflected the complexion of the Congregation.

Rev. John MacKenzie remained as pastor of the Congregation until 1808 when he returned to his previous congregation in Aberdeen. In 1810 Rev. David Carment, who was 'entertaining and very popular', was inducted to the charge but he was so opposed to the radical movement afoot at that time that he was forced to leave Glasgow for a time until things calmed down. That did not affect his popularity, however, and when he returned people thronged to hear him in such numbers that boards had to be placed across the aisles to increase the seating. He was involved in forming an association in Glasgow called 'The Highland Strangers Society'. However, in 1822 Rev. Carment received a call from the Parish of Rosskeen, which he accepted.

David Carment's successor in Duke Street, Rev. Robert Clark, was a completely different type of person. Like the first minister he came from Aberdeen Gaelic Chapel but he was very solemn and did not enjoy good health. During his time in Glasgow he was helped by

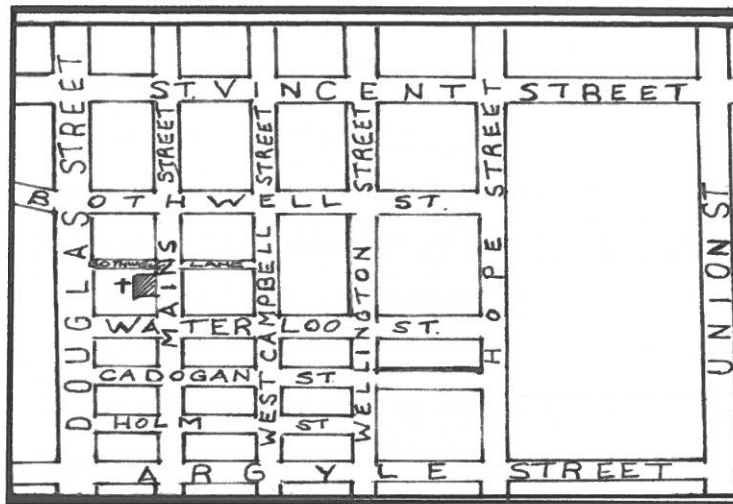
several assistants one of whom was the well known 'Rabbi' Duncan. By 1831 the Congregation were longing for a change and in 1834 he returned to his native Sutherland. By this time there were three Gaelic Chapels in Glasgow and when Robert Clark left Duke Street it left all three vacant. Both Duke Street and Hope Street were interested in Rev. Lewis Rose to fill the vacancy but he chose Duke Street where he was inducted in 1836. In 1843 he remained with the Establishment but the Congregation did not follow him. Within a matter of months Rev. Rose realised that with only a remnant of his congregation left, the Duke Street charge was no longer viable and he left and went to Kincardine & Creich. The congregation he left behind in Duke Street had to wait until 1847 before another minister was inducted – Rev. John MacKay - but he resigned after two years.

The Free Church section of the Congregation tried several times, all unsuccessful, to acquire the building on Duke Street - the House of Lords ruling against them - even although the Established Church had no further use for it. Following the resignation of Rev. John MacKay the charge was done away with and the old Gaelic Chapel was bought by Father Peter Forbes who established St Vincent's Roman Catholic Mission. The building was later demolished to allow for an extension of College Street Goods Yard.

Following the Disruption in 1843 it seems that the first meeting place of the Duke Street Free Church was in the Black Bull Inn. They had hoped to repossess the original chapel but that was not to be. At a Presbytery meeting in 1845 they asked to be allowed to worship with the Bridgegate Congregation and in May of the same year it was agreed by Presbytery as a result of a petition, signed by about 500 people, that the Highland Congregation be recognised as a separate fixed charge. In September of that year the Presbytery approved the settlement of a minister for the Congregation with the result that in January 1846 the Rev. John Noble was inducted. (The call was signed by 918 people.) The Duke Street Congregation was granted a new site for a church in 1848 but before anything was done Rev. Noble died in 1849.

When the Presbytery learned in 1850 that the Congregation had, without the permission of the Presbytery, parted with the original site and acquired another, they refused to allow any construction work to go ahead but eventually Duke Street Gaelic Free Church was

erected in the 1850's at 76 Mains Street, between Waterloo Street and Bothwell Lane.



**DUKE STREET GAELIC FREE CHURCH  
GLASGOW 1900**

After the death of Rev John Noble the Congregation was vacant for some time but this vacancy was filled in 1854 by the translation of Rev. George C. MacLeod from Inverness. He was an active worker in outreach among destitute Highlanders but family problems led to his resignation in 1867. He was employed in outreach work by the Highland Committee until his death in 1888. Another short vacancy was filled in 1869 by the Rev. Evan Gordon's induction and he ministered for 25 years to a congregation comprised to a large extent of Gaelic-speaking working class people. In the beginning of his ministry the Congregation reached its greatest prosperity with the result that they were able to give their minister a supplement of £260. By the 1880's, however, Duke Street suffered a downturn in attendance and therefore in income largely due to unemployment. Rev. Gordon retired from the Congregation in 1893 and died in 1904.

At the passing of the Declaratory Act in 1892 Duke Street Congregation went through what perhaps proved to be the most severe crisis in its history.

Evan Gordon was followed by Rev. John MacLeod a Skye man born in 1852 and ordained to Duke Street in 1894.

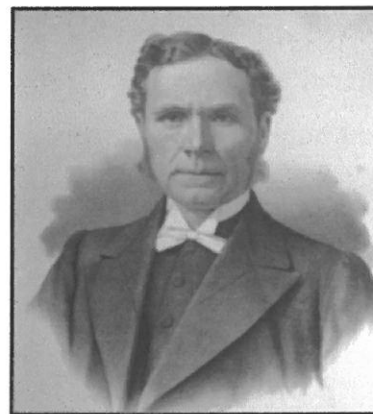
Rev. MacLeod was born in Staffin, Skye and the sound religious training he had received

in his early years greatly influenced his later life. He originally trained as a member of the Police Force but after his conversion he left and went to Aberdeen University with a view to the Ministry and after his training at the Free Church College was ordained and inducted to the charge of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church. He had the gift, no doubt as a result of the Police Training, of recognizing people he had met or faces he had seen before and he used that gift to great advantage in gathering in the Highland youth scattered throughout Glasgow. He was a man of deep piety and strong convictions and in Duke Street exercised a very gracious ministry. Duke Street was his only charge and when he became their Minister he had found the Congregation disturbed by the recent Free Presbyterian movement but he succeeded in bringing them together under his shepherding and the Congregation grew so that by the time of his retriial between 800 and 900 were prepared to sign a call to a Successor.

During his Ministry, the Communion Seasons at Duke Street became a place of liberty for both preachers and people, and his fellowship a refreshing experience to the ministers who assisted him at such times.

At the time of the Union in 1900 the Duke Street Gaelic Free Church declined to enter, the decision to remain within the Free Church being unanimous and their building was never in dispute. Rev. John MacLeod was one of the "Twenty Seven " who adhered to the Free Church.

In the summer of 1902 Rev. MacLeod was involved in a driving accident. However he recovered quickly and was able to carry on.



Rev. John MacLeod

At the annual Congregational Meeting in 1904 Rev. John MacLeod presided. There was cause for thankfulness to God, he said, for His goodness to them as a Congregation. He made reference to the loss sustained by the Congregation in the removal by death of several highly esteemed members during the previous year, but considering all their circumstances he felt they were doing well.

In July of that year the Congregation sustained a great loss by the death of their

Treasurer, Mr. Thomas MacMillan. He had come to Glasgow from Glenurquhart in the early 1870's and attached himself to Duke Street. On the passing of the Declaratory Act in 1892 he was one of those who stuck loyally with Rev. Gordon and those who remained connected with the church. Mr. MacMillan was made an elder shortly after Rev. MacLeod became pastor.

Early in 1905 the Congregation sustained another loss by the death of another elder, Mr. Alexander MacKenzie who was a son of the well-known Catechist in Gairloch. When he first arrived in Glasgow he had attended the Govan Congregation where he had been an elder, but around 1893 he had moved from Govan and attached himself to the Duke Street Congregation and in due time he was made an elder in that congregation. On the following Sabbath Rev. MacLeod paid tribute to the life and character of their highly esteemed friend.

At the annual meeting in 1905 Rev. MacLeod said he was very thankful to the congregation for the way in which they kept together when he was so often away from them in connection with the regular work of the church. (It appears that he was looking after the Congregation of Kilmuir & Stenscholl - his own native congregation - who were without a minister and he spent some time with them each year.) By then he had been their minister for ten years and ten years in such a Congregation was a solemn time in a man's life. He reported that since he had become their minister he had married 345 couples, baptised 707 persons and attended 216 funerals.

In the following month, on 8th March 1905 the church building in Mains Street was extensively damaged by fire but, by January 1907, the church, at considerable cost, had undergone extensive structural alterations which improved the comfort and safety of the Congregation. It was a practically new church and was more adequate than before for the requirements of a city charge. Some of the walls were rebuilt and the roof and ceiling made much higher. The whole of the sitting accommodation was rearranged and made more comfortable. Also a beautiful large pulpit had been erected in place of the old one. The main entrance to the church was made in Mains Street instead of Bothwell Lane where it had been before and this gave direct access to the church and also the new hall, which had been made in the basement, with sitting accommodation for over 300 people.

Electric light and heating apparatus were put in which were a great comfort to the Congregation. The cost of all the work was about £3306 and an appeal was made throughout the church for assistance to defray the cost. When one of the elders, pleading the cause of the Congregation on the floor of the General Assembly that year, was asked how long he had been connected with the Congregation he replied "Longer than Moses was connected with the children of Israel!" A grant of £275 was made by the Assembly. At the next annual meeting the Congregation was asked by the Treasurer to put their 'shoulder to the wheel' in order that the 'building' debt could be paid off as soon as possible. Rev. MacLeod said that considering all their trials during the previous years they had done remarkably well.

During the year there had been 34 funerals in connection with the Congregation, 37 marriages and he had baptised 111 persons although 45 of those belonged to outside congregations of the church.

At the spring Communion in 1908 the assisting ministers were Prof. J. MacLeod, Rev. A. Stewart from Edinburgh and Rev. G. MacKay, Stornoway. The attendance at the Fellowship Meeting was the largest that had been seen for years and at the Gaelic service on Sabbath evening the people had to be accommodated on the platform and in the passages.

During that year the Congregation lost two of its elders, Mr. William MacLean at the early age of 37 years and John MacLeod (Jnr) who had come to Glasgow during the ministry of Rev. Gordon. During his time in the Congregation he had been Session Clerk, Sabbath School Superintendent and also taught a Bible Class.

At a meeting held in May 1911 Rev. John MacLeod spoke on the state of the Free Church in Glasgow. He said that 'The Church is not altogether wise for in Glasgow and its suburbs it is erecting too many new buildings and multiplying too many weak charges. In the present state of the church, the three city centre congregations are too near each other and the weak congregations in the suburbs are within reach of them. The church should consolidate and strengthen the existing congregations and avoid erecting new buildings.'

Ninety years later the same question regarding the city centre charges was raised.



In 1914 a special event took place in the Congregation when Rev. John MacLeod got married and he and his wife were presented with a gift from the Congregation.

During the Communion Season in October 1919 at which Rev. Professor J.R. MacKay, Rev. John MacLennan and Rev. Roderick MacLeod assisted, the Services were all well attended and on Sabbath evening the Church and hall were crowded. Extra seats had to be put in the passages and on the platform and the Pulpit steps were also used. Even at that, many had to remain standing throughout the Service. It was estimated that there were about 400 more than the recognised seating accommodation. - mostly young Highlanders. There had not been so many young men seen attending church since the beginning of the War.

On the following Friday, the Congregation gathered to make a presentation to Mr. John Shaw who was leaving to go in for the ministry. Rev. MacLeod presented him with a gift of £31.00 and thanked him for his services as an office bearer and as a missionary. The Welfare of Youth Prizes were also presented that evening by Mrs. MacLeod.

In 1921 Rev. John MacLeod officially retired from the Congregation of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church having been their minister for 27 years. He was a faithful Pastor and sympathetic friend to the many young Highlanders who came to Glasgow.

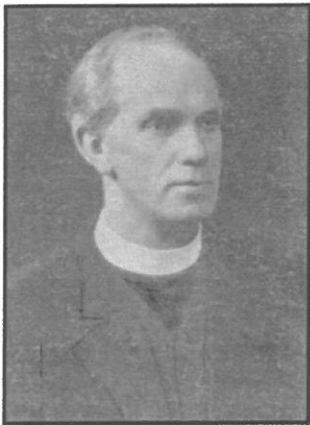
On his retiral Mr. MacLeod went to live in Rothesay where he continued to take a keen interest in the Church including the oversight of the small congregation in Strachur and was also a member of the Church's Committees. He died on 13th October 1939 after a short illness. Another of that small band of Constitutionals who remained loyal to the Old Banner in 1900 had been called home.

A grand nephew of Rev. John MacLeod still worships in the Free Church Congregation in Staffin, Skye. As a young lad he can remember acting as 'scribe' for Rev. MacLeod's sister, who was living in Skye, when her brother wrote to her.

In July 1921 the Congregation of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church entered a new stage in its history when the Rev. Andrew Sutherland was inducted to the charge. Mr. Sutherland was from Dornoch and though not a native Gaelic speaker he learned the language and

preached as ably in it as in English. Having come to know the Lord in early years there were those living around him who expressed the hope that he would be used of the Lord in His Service. He had gifts of heart and mind and an attractive disposition which endeared him to his Christian friends even in those early years. The Call to labour in the ministry was to him very real and compelling when it came. After his university course he was ordained and inducted in 1910 to the Lochbroom Free Presbyterian Congregation. Immediately he made his mark there as a lively preacher of the Word and as a diligent pastor. The rousing appeals and solemn warnings which characterised his preaching from the very beginning were often blessed by the Lord in the conversion of souls. In 1919 he was admitted to the Free Church and inducted to the charge of Lairg.

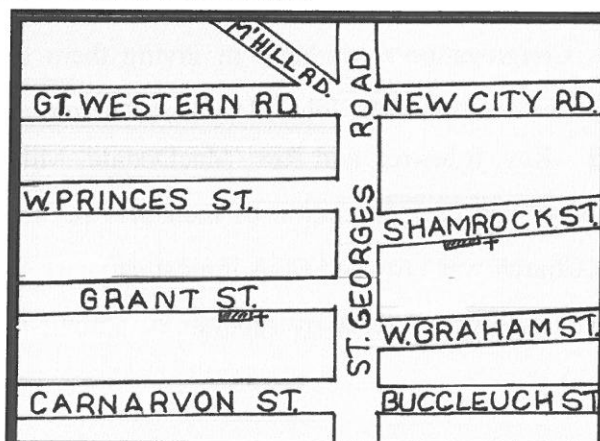
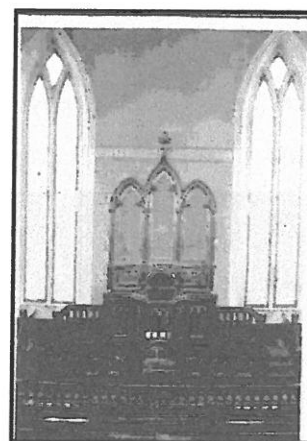
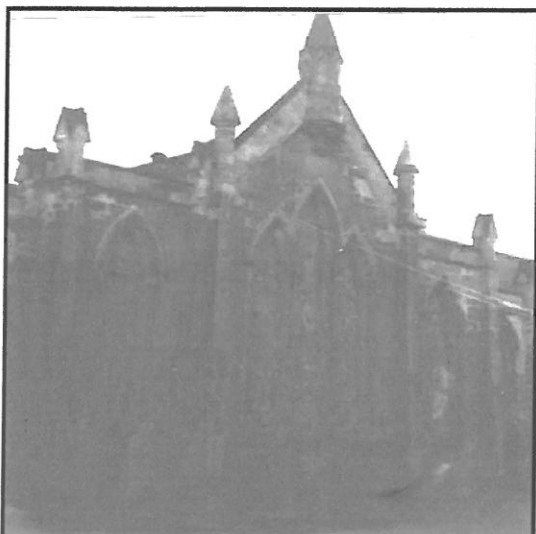
His induction to Duke Street took place on 20<sup>th</sup> April when a large congregation gathered for the occasion. Rev. Andrew Orr preached and presided and Rev. Alexander Renwick, Dumbarton, addressed the new minister and the Congregation. At the close of the service Mr. Donald Nicolson presented Rev. Sutherland with a Pulpit Bible



and Psalm Book and a wallet of notes. Mr. Colin Brown, in the name of the ladies, presented Mrs. Sutherland with a handbag and extended to Mr. & Mrs. Sutherland a hearty and cordial welcome to Duke Street Free Church. In a very appropriate manner Mr. Sutherland, on behalf of himself and his wife expressed their sincere appreciation of the Congregation's kindness in giving them such a handsome presentation. Mr. John MacAllister then presented both Rev. Andrew Sutherland Rev. Renwick and Rev. MacDonald, Milton, with a pocket book containing a sum of money in appreciation of their services to the Congregation during the vacancy. The Church was crowded to its utmost capacity showing that Mr. & Mrs. Sutherland were well known, at least by reputation, among the Highlanders of Glasgow.

In 1923 the Congregation suffered a great loss when Mr. Donald Nicolson left the city. He had been associated with the Congregation for 45 years and with the Sabbath School, of which he was Superintendent, since it started in 1896. He was presented with a gift from the teachers and pupils.

During 1928 the Church building in Mains Street was condemned due to serious structural defects and it meant a time of uncertainty for the Congregation as they had to move from place to place to hold the services. Eventually, they were able to purchase a building in Grant Street which became vacant following the merger of two United Free Congregations.



Duke Street Gaelic Free Church 1935

The first service in the Grant Street building was held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1930 and was conducted by Rev. Kenneth MacRae. The Congregation retained the name 'Duke Street Gaelic Free Church'.

At the spring Communion in 1933 one of the assisting Ministers was Rev. MacRae, Stornoway, and he wrote in Diary of feeling refreshed at the Duke Street Communion. The attendances exceeded anything seen during the previous 30 years. There were eleven new members.

In July 1935, having completed their course at the Free Church College, four young men of the Congregation were licensed as Ministers of the Free Church - Angus Finlayson, John MacPherson, Hector MacRury and Murdo Nicolson. Each was presented with a Bible and a silver mounted walking stick.

A deep impression was made on the Congregation by the sudden death in 1935 of Mr. Zachariah MacKenzie aged 20. Known to his friends as 'Zachie' he was held in high esteem and warm regard and had become a communicant member at the young age of 16 years. He was a bi-lingual precentor and in that capacity gave frequent service to the Congregation. His young life left an example which all who knew him would not readily forget.

At the Annual Congregational Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1939 the deep interest in the Congregation and its affairs was demonstrated by the excellent attendance of the people which fully taxed the capacity of the large hall. After worship conducted by Rev. Murdoch Campbell, Partick Highland, Rev. Andrew Sutherland, in characteristic fashion introduced the business of the meeting and at the close acknowledged his gratitude to the Most High for His goodness to them as a Congregation and to himself as their Minister. A pleasant meeting was brought to a close with praise and the Benediction.

In December 1940 the Congregation lost one of the older generation of Office Bearers by

the death of Martin MacLean. He was born in Staffin, Skye, but left the island as a young man and came to Glasgow where he worshipped in Duke Street for over fifty years.

Throughout his ministry Rev. Sutherland suffered from deafness and often used an ear trumpet to help him. This handicap had cut him off from the administrative work of the Church and also prevented him from being called to be Moderator of the General Assembly, which was widely regretted, as the Church would have delighted to honour him in this way. Instead he gave his whole time and energy to the duty of Pastor and maintained a close contact with every family in his Congregation. His Pastoral sympathy and devotion made him a much loved friend in the hundreds of homes which he regularly visited. His methodical way of working and his careful planning was the envy of his brethren. He would intimate from the pulpit on Sabbath which streets he would be visiting during the coming week. He was often accompanied on these visits by Mrs. Sutherland.

As a comforter of God's suffering people Mr. Sutherland had few equals. He knew the trials and he also knew how to speak "a word in season". This was no more evident than at the time of the 'Blitz'.

Practically all the Congregations in Glasgow were directly or indirectly affected by the holocaust that took toll of many districts. Church buildings were damaged, though not badly, but there were several distressing fatalities. Several members and adherents of the Duke Street Congregation were killed and injured. The first fatality was Murdoch MacKenzie of Kilmaluag, Skye, who was killed while carrying out his duties as a member of the City Police Force. Shortly after that, came the sad news of the deaths of a mother and her two daughters. Mrs. Annie MacLeod, a native of Lochalsh, and her daughters Mary and Annie were killed when a bomb made a direct hit on the tenement in which they lived in Dudley Drive. Rev. Sutherland wrote at the time "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives and in their death they were not divided".

One daughter, Morag, survived but a cousin who was visiting them was also killed.

In his Diary for the following week Rev. Kenneth MacRae wrote of hearing of the bombing and the deaths of Mrs. MacLeod and her daughters.

A few days later he heard that Rev. Andrew Sutherland was so badly affected that he had been unable to preach on the Sabbath. He wrote that it was little wonder as he must have been broken hearted.

Being the Pastor of such a large congregation for over twenty years and particularly during the war years had proved arduous for Mr. Sutherland so when he received a call from the Tobermory Congregation in May 1941 he accepted it.

A meeting was held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May when a large attendance of the Congregation and friends met to take a reluctant farewell of a much-loved pastor. Rev. Alex MacLeod, Govan, presided. After worship, Mr. MacLeod referred in a sympathetic way to the painful feelings of both Minister and Congregation in view of the imminent departure of Rev. Sutherland. They were parting with one who had excelled in his conscientious application to duty. He also spoke of Mr. Sutherland's ever-ready sympathy and understanding which had endeared him to all who had come in contact with him. Mr. John MacCuish, elder, was called upon to make a presentation to Rev. Sutherland which was in the form of a leather suitcase and a very substantial cheque. He spoke briefly and sincerely, expressing their deep sorrow at parting with such a faithful Minister. In reply, Mr. Sutherland, who was visibly affected, said how sore he felt the parting that evening. He had ministered to them for over twenty years sharing in both their joys and sorrows. He was happiest when he was among them, and thanked them for their unfailing kindness and hospitality. He also thanked the Office Bearers for their loyalty and support throughout the years. Mr. Sutherland paid high tribute to the assistance he had received from Mrs. Sutherland who was always with him in the work of the Congregation. It had been no light decision to leave the Congregation but had been made on medical advice. He had to take care of his remaining physical strength if a breakdown was to be avoided, and so it was with a heavy heart that he was leaving them. He thanked them for their liberality in the gifts he had received.

Mrs. MacKenzie (who was the oldest member) was then invited to make a presentation to Mrs. Sutherland and this took the form of a leather handbag. She made reference to Mrs. Sutherland's interest in both young and old in the Congregation. In reply, Mrs.

Sutherland thanked the Congregation for their gift. She would treasure it not only for its value but also for their kindly feelings towards herself of which it would always remind her. She would take with her happy memories of the time she had been privileged to spend amongst them.

Their two soldier sons, Angus and David, were not forgotten and Mr. Hugh Boyd presented them each with a gold mounted fountain pen. He said they had followed, with interest, their progress year by year and it was their prayer that God would keep them safe. David was not able to be present but in his reply Angus paid tribute to the work performed by his father as Minister of Duke Street and to his mother as a tireless helper in the interests of the Congregation. He said it was good to be back in Duke Street again and he thanked the Congregation for the gifts for his brother and himself and assured them that the pens would be put into service without delay.

Donald MacDonald (Elder) then rose to pay humble but sincere tribute to the man who, under God, had made Duke Street what it was that day. To all, Rev. Sutherland had been a warmhearted friend, a zealous pastor and a faithful preacher. He (Mr. Sutherland) was jealous over Duke Street in a godly way. In a sense he would always remain the Minister of Duke Street in a special way in the hearts of the people, both young and old. They regretted his leaving them, but the many strenuous and exacting years of toil had taken their toll of his strength. But they must not be too cast down. They had the good hope of seeing and hearing him again and again. Mr. MacDonald then paid tribute to the work done by Mrs. Sutherland and also said how proud they were of the Sutherland sons, and hoped that the Lord would spare them to return to Duke Street and carry on the Sutherland tradition. A solemn and deeply affecting meeting was brought to a close with Praise and the Benediction.

At the last service taken by Rev. Andrew Sutherland in Duke Street Free Church he took as his text “ The harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and you are not saved.” (Jeremiah Chap.8 v 20 ). The church was packed and it was said that there was hardly a dry eye in the place.

The link between Rev. Sutherland and many of his Glasgow friends remained unbroken to the end. A few weeks before his death he was deeply affected by the letters which reached him from some of his old Glasgow friends in the Lord.

Rev. Andrew Sutherland remained in Tobermory for four years before accepting a Call to Glenshiel, retiring from there in 1951. However, for Mr. Sutherland there was no real retirement for after he had settled in Dores and then in Dingwall his services were still in demand in many congregations. During his time in Dores he reached his jubilee in the ministry of the Gospel

At the time of his death in February 1963 Rev. Kenneth MacRae wrote that he was saddened to hear of the death of his dear old friend Andrew Sutherland, whom he always would remember in connection with the Duke Street of long ago. He was one of the last of the Old School and a faithful pastor if ever there was one. He would miss him. Andrew Sutherland was buried in Fodderty Churchyard and was the oldest minister in the Free Church at the time of his death.

Shortly after Rev. Andrew Sutherland left Duke Street a Call was addressed to Rev. Kenneth MacRae, Stornoway, but he stopped it. He said that perhaps the defence of the Sabbath was another good reason for his remaining in Stornoway. In Glasgow, the Sabbath was gone in any case but that in Stornoway it was in the balance. The issue of church policies also had an important bearing on his decision. He felt he would have much more weight as a conservative influence in the Church as Minister of Stornoway with Lewis men behind him than he would have as minister of Duke Street.

On 13<sup>th</sup> May 1942 the Duke Street vacancy was filled when the Glasgow Presbytery met in the Church for the induction of Rev. Alexander MacDonald, formerly of Strathpeffer. The Church was packed with the Congregation, friends and representatives from other city denominations to welcome Mr. MacDonald who was well known and highly esteemed in evangelical circles. Friends from Edinburgh and the north were also present and the Glasgow Presbytery was out in force for the occasion. Wing – Commander Rev. M.K. MacLeod, Assistant Staff Chaplain for Scotland and Northern Ireland, was also in





Rev. A. MacDonald

his place with the Fathers and Brethren.

Rev. Donald Gibson, Govanhill, presided and took his text from Psalm 71 v 16. After the sermon the Moderator read out the questions put to ministers at their induction and having answered these satisfactorily Rev. MacDonald was inducted to the charge of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church and was given the right hand of Fellowship by the members of Presbytery.

Rev. Alexander MacLeod, Partick, addressed the Minister and recalled their time as students together sharing the same rooms. He said he often looked back on those days with peculiar pleasure and was glad to have the honour of welcoming his very good friend to Duke Street and assured him that he would find his new Congregation loyal and warm hearted.

The Congregation was then addressed by Rev. Alexander MacLeod, Govan, who said it was their duty and privilege to rally round their new Minister. He had come to work among them and for them and it was their duty to endeavour to be in their usual places at the various services. They were not to be unreasonable in their expectations of their Minister. He had come from a country charge to a large city Congregation and they were to give him time to settle in.

Rev A. MacLeod, Govan, as Interim Moderator then asked Mr. D. MacDonald, Elder, to speak and he began by saying that it was with truly thankful hearts that the Congregation had witnessed the induction of their new Minister. Rev. Andrew Sutherland had ministered for over twenty-one years in Duke Street and they had been sorry to see him go, but that night they welcomed Rev. Alexander MacDonald with great joy. He was a man greatly loved and highly esteemed by all who knew him. Mr. D. MacDonald also welcomed Mrs. MacDonald, who perhaps was not as well known as her husband but if sterling Christian character and charming efficiency would win the day she was already a pronounced success.

He also extended a warm welcome to the MacDonald family, Alasdair, Lucy and Iain and said they would follow their progress with interest. He concluded by assuring Rev. Alexander MacDonald of an ever-ready welcome not only to the homes but also to the hearts of Duke Street, now his Congregation.

Mr. Hugh Boyd, Elder, was then called on by the Chairman to make a presentation to the new Minister. He recalled his time in Glasgow saying that as a young lad coming to the city he had sought out the Duke Street Congregation and he could now look back on being associated with it for over fifty-nine years. He presented Rev. MacDonald with a handsome cheque and said it was his earnest prayer that their new minister would be happy and blessed in his labours in his new Congregation. Mr. Angus MacLeod then handed over a cheque to Mrs. MacDonald saying it was a real pleasure to do so. The MacDonald children were presented with bound Bibles suitably inscribed. Rev. MacDonald then replied on behalf of himself and his family thanking the Congregation for their kindness to them. He then called on Mr. John MacCuish to make a presentation to Rev. Alexander MacLeod, Govan, for his help as Interim Moderator. Rev. Alexander MacLeod, Partick, was not forgotten when Mr. Robert Pollock presented him with a cheque thanking him for the services which he too had given during the vacancy. The meeting was closed by Rev. Ferguson, Fort Augustus, leading in prayer.

Rev. MacDonald was a native of Sleat, Skye and was educated at Kingussie School and then moved to Edinburgh University to study for the ministry. At the time, his school headmaster wrote that he had never recommended a boy with more hopeful confidence for any course than he did in that case. He spoke of Alexander MacDonald's high ideals, his honourable, manly conduct and loveable nature, and also mentioned that he excelled in Classics and English. Unfortunately his University Course was interrupted by illness which left its mark leaving him with limited physical energy. He had been Ordained and Inducted to Strathpeffer in 1923 and there also took a very active part in non-denominational Christian work especially among the young people and under his guidance a branch of the Christian Endeavour Movement was formed. In later years members of that group entered the ministry, went to the mission field and became lay preachers. It was something of a contrast when he went to Glasgow, to the large Duke

Street Congregation which absorbed his limited energy and his outside activities were necessarily curtailed.

During Rev. MacDonald's ministry in Duke Street the Church would be packed and people would go very early, especially for the Evening Service in order to get into their own pew. On the Sabbath Evening of the Communion the Gaelic Service would be held in a church in Shamrock Street nearby and the English Service in the Church in Grant Street as the Hall would be too small to hold the people.

There were very many young people in the Congregation in those days as can be seen from the photo taken at the annual picnic in 1947.



**Duke Street Sabbath School Outing 1947**

In November 1947 a very special honour was given to Rev. MacDonald when it was announced that he had been unanimously nominated to be the Moderator of the next General Assembly to be held in May 1948. On his nomination it was said that since coming to Duke Street in 1942 he had gathered around him an enthusiastic group of young people on whose character and lives he was leaving an indelible impression. Reference was also made to his many natural gifts and to his eloquence in preaching in both Gaelic and English, making him a popular preacher. It was, however, for his pastoral work that he was well known. His kindly disposition and warm

sympathy made him a welcome visitor to the homes of his people.

Having a graceful literary style, he had contributed some notable articles to the Church magazines but it was justly said that throughout his entire ministry he had concentrated on the congregational side of the work and it was good that this fact was now being recognized.

At the General Assembly in Edinburgh in May 1948 Rev. Alexander MacDonald was installed as Moderator. On proposing his name, the retiring moderator, Rev. William



Campbell, Garabost, referred to Mr. MacDonald's claim to that honour at the hands of his brethren, as Minister successively of two large and influential congregations and as one who had given service to the Standing Committees of the Church. In seconding, Mr. William Stewart, Glasgow, again made reference to Rev. MacDonald's gifts as a preacher in both Gaelic and English and to his diligence and faithfulness as a pastor.

Rev. A. MacDonald

In his Moderatorial Address Rev. MacDonald spoke much of the horrors of war which were still alive in the minds of all. "It has already taken its toll of two generations. It has entered our cities and homes. It has conditioned our daily lives for over forty years. Its dread lies as a burden upon the hearts of men."

During 1948 a series of special Evangelistic Meetings were held in the Congregation when Rev. W.R. MacKay was the preacher. It was a time of great blessing in the Congregation and many can look back to that time as being the time in which their lives were changed.

In late 1954 the Congregation suffered a great loss with the passing of their of much loved senior Elder, Mr. Donald MacFarlane. He was a native of Lewis and had served the Congregation for over half a century. He was an 'old soldier' who lost little of his

soldierly bearing even after passing four score years. His tall handsome figure was noticeable in any gathering. It was wonderful to see the confidence and friendliness he inspired among the boys of the Congregation as he marshaled them at their sports on the day of the Sabbath School Picnic. He was greatly missed by both Pastor and people.

In 1956 Rev. MacDonald had a very serious illness and retirement seemed inevitable, but as he recovered he said he felt he had been restored to health for the sake of some work which yet remained for him to do. After his last sermon before his illness, the minister for whom he was preaching remarked that his message was a very solemn one, to which Mr. MacDonald replied, "There is not much time left." He lived to see fruit for his labours in Duke Street.

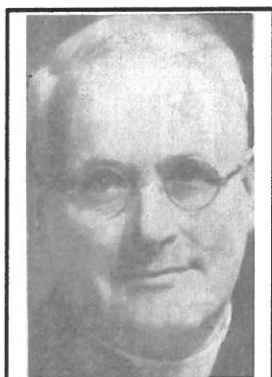
He continued to minister to his large Congregation now spread all over the city. That did not hinder him from visiting his people, very often using public transport to do so.

Up to that time the Sabbath Services were still Gaelic at 11.00am and English at 2.00pm and 6.30pm and, between the morning and afternoon Services, there was the Sabbath School at 12.45pm. It was always a treat for the children when Mr. MacDonald would come and speak to them and tell them a story. His way with the children was something special and his message was simple but at the same time profound. He would often come the Sabbath before the Picnic and tell us that we were all to come and bring a friend and a 'mug'! In those days the Picnics were always held at Mugdock Park and on the Saturday morning some of the older ladies and gentlemen would go out early and get the big boilers lit to heat the water for the tea. There always seemed to be an abundance of goodies to eat and drink and all the children got a 'doggy-bag' to take home. The races were a highlight of the day for the children and they also enjoyed watching the adults' races.

In the late 1950's the afternoon Service was changed to 12.30pm. This made things easier for Rev. MacDonald and also for the Congregation, many of whom were traveling a fairly long distance to the church and they could now attend the Gaelic and English Service one after the other without the long break in between.

In the late 1950's a rather unique situation came about in the Congregation when four brothers were Elders at the same time – Roddy, Norman, Neil and Dougald MacPherson– and to add to the uniqueness, one of Norman's sons, Iain, was also an elder at the time.

In August 1961 the Duke Street Congregation was stunned when they heard of the sudden death of their Minister. Rev. & Mrs. MacDonald had gone on holiday to St. Monance in Fife, Mr. MacDonald appearing to be in very good health. He became unwell on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> August but it was not until late in the Sabbath afternoon that there was any sign of serious illness. He was taken into hospital in Kirkcaldy and within two hours he



**Glasgow  
minister dies  
on holiday**

**THE** Rev. Alexander MacDonald, who for the last 19 years has been minister of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church, St. George's Cross, Glasgow, died last night in Kirkcaldy Victoria Hospital after a short illness.

Mr MacDonald, who was 66, took ill while on holiday at St. Monance, Fife. He was moderator of the Free Church of Scotland in 1958.

Mr MacDonald, whose home address was 24 Ashburton Road, Kelvindale, Glasgow, was educated at King's Hill School and Edinburgh University.

He is survived by his wife, his daughter Lucy, who is senior sister of the Homeopathic Hospital, Glasgow, and two sons – the Rev. Alistair MacDonald, of Bishopbriggs Free Church, and Iain MacDonald, who has a post with the Rhodesian Government.

**MACDONALD** — Suddick, CR. 27th August, 1961. Rev. ALEXANDER MACDONALD, M.A. (minister of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church, Glasgow, formerly of Glasgow Free Church, Glasgow) — beloved husband of Isabella Gillies Fraser — Service on Thursday, 1st inst., at 2 p.m. at Duke Street Free Church, Great Street, Glasgow thereafter to Calder Cemetery, Bishopbriggs.

had passed away. His cheerfulness as the end approached was an inspiring pleasant memory for those who were privileged to witness it.

On the following Sabbath Evening Rev. W.R. MacKay, a close friend of Rev. MacDonald, took the Service preaching from Acts Chap. 13 v 36 – “(David) after he had served his own generation by the will of God fell on sleep.” A fitting epitaph to Rev. Alexander MacDonald.

The Church was packed for the occasion.

In a moving tribute by one of Mr. MacDonald's close friends it was said that the greatest quality that had shown in Mr. MacDonald's life and ministry was that of humility. He had no place for ambition and his estimate of 'greatness' was expressed in the words he often said from the pulpit - 'There can never be too little of you for God to use but there can be too much of you' and because he coveted earnestly to be

'used' he greatly feared the 'too much'. In his preaching he was at his best when dealing with this theme.

“Not I, but Christ be honoured, loved, exalted  
Not I, but Christ be seen and known and heard.”

Reference was also made to the fact that, great preacher as he was, his prayers were even more impressive than his sermons. They flowed from his heart in living words that expressed his deepest yearnings. There was never a suggestion of pious 'cliché'.

Mr. MacDonald also had a nice sense of humour which had no bitterness and he never uttered a word of unkind criticism.

It was not only in the Congregation that had enjoyed the privilege of his ministry but throughout the Free Church and in other denominations that the loss was felt. At the time a distinguished minister of the Church of Scotland, penning a tribute in his memory, said, "Not only his family and the Free Church, but the whole of Christian Scotland is the poorer for his passing."

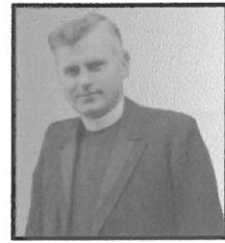
Rev. MacDonald died, as he would have wished, in active service. He had been Minister of Duke Street for nineteen years.

At the time of his death the young people in the Bible Class which Mrs. MacDonald held wrote to her expressing their sympathy and in replying she said how touched she was to receive it. Young people always had a special place in Mr. MacDonald's heart.

And so another era in the life of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church came to a close.

The Duke Street Congregation was now vacant and Rev. John Morrison, Govan, was appointed Interim Moderator. This situation remained until January 1963 when on the eleventh of that month the Glasgow Presbytery met in the Church for the induction of Rev. Neil A. MacLeod, formerly of Partick Free Church. The Church was full for the occasion when Rev. A. R. Fraser, Moderator that year, preached and presided taking as his text 2 Samuel chap.5 v 10. After worship the Interim Moderator gave a narrative of the steps leading up to the Call to Rev. MacLeod who was then inducted to the charge of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church. Rev. Malcolm Morrison, Partick Highland, addressed the new Minister offering him caution and comfort from God's Word – 'We will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word'. In addressing the Congregation Rev. John Morrison based his words on Hebrews Chap 13 v 7. After these addresses the usual presentations were made. Mr. Kenneth MacDonald, Senior

Elder presented Rev. Neil MacLeod with a well filled wallet of notes and expressed the good wishes of the Congregation. The oldest lady member, Mrs. MacKinnon made presentations to Mrs. MacLeod and the MacLeod children. Rev. Neil MacLeod then rose to thank people for their kindness to himself and his family and based his remarks on the key word 'Unity'.



Rev. Neil MacLeod

The Interim Moderator was also remembered and received a wallet of notes from Mr. MacPherson in recognition of the faithful work he had willingly undertaken for them.

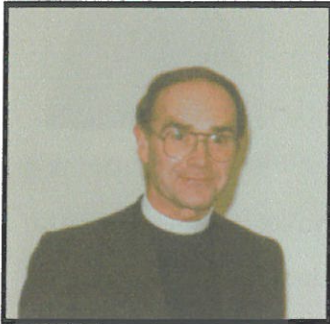
It was quite a coincidence that, side-by-side in the Monthly Record for April 1963, there was an 'In Memoriam' to Rev. Andrew Sutherland the Minister of Duke Street from 1921 to 1941 and the report of the Induction of Rev. Neil MacLeod to that same Congregation.

During Rev. MacLeod's ministry the usual activities were carried on. A Bible Class was started after the Evening Service and various speakers were invited along to speak to the young people. Outings for the Bible class were organized and these were enjoyed by all who went.

Sadly, however, things were not as they should have been and after a time of uncertainty The Duke Street Congregation was declared vacant in 1979. Rev. Douglas MacMillan, St. Vincent Street, was appointed Interim Moderator.

The vacancy was filled on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1980 when the Glasgow Presbytery met in Duke Street Gaelic Free Church for the induction of Rev. Donald N. MacLeod formerly of Lochbroom. Rev. Alasdair Johnston, Dumbarton, who took as his text 2 Corinthians Chap 4 v 5, conducted public worship. Several ministers were associated with the Presbytery for the occasion and in total twenty-two ministers were present. Having answered the usual questions Rev. MacLeod was inducted to the charge of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church and given the right hand of fellowship by the Moderator and the Presbytery. The new minister was addressed by Rev. Peter Jackson, Milton, and the Congregation by Rev. Douglas MacMillan.





Rev. Donald N. MacLeod

That part of the evening was brought to a close with the singing of some verses from Psalm 72 and the Benediction. It was then time for the usual presentations and these were made, first to Rev. MacLeod by Mr. Samuel Stoddart, Treasurer, and then to Mrs. MacLeod by Mrs. MacCuish, Senior Member.

Rev. MacLeod thanked the Congregation for their kindness to himself and his family. Rev. Douglas MacMillan also expressed his thanks on receiving a gift in appreciation of all he had done for them during the vacancy. The ladies of the Congregation then served tea in the Hall.

In the late 1970's it became apparent that the area around Duke Street Church was home to many immigrant families, mainly Asian, and it was felt that here, right on their doorstep, was a 'Mission Field'. Miss Julia MacKenzie of the Congregation started outreach work among these families and many contacts were made. Shortly after, Miss MacKenzie was appointed by the Free Church as Missionary to the Immigrant Community in Glasgow. She moved into the area and her home became a place where these people were welcome and where she could offer them advice and help. As well as door-to-door visiting Miss MacKenzie started Saturday Clubs for the girls and boys. The boys met in the Church Hall where they played games and had a short Bible lesson and the girls met in Miss MacKenzie's home where they were taught various crafts and also had a short Bible lesson. Several people from the Congregation helped with these clubs and as the children got to know the people various activities and outings were arranged for them and they also joined the Congregation on some of the annual outings.



### **Duke Street Sabbath School Outing 1982**

In 1984 Rev. Ian & Alina MacKenzie who had come back to Scotland after twenty years on the Mission Field in India joined the Asian Work and attached themselves to the Duke Street Congregation. Rev. Ian MacKenzie was officially appointed Assistant Minister of Duke Street. In 1991 he moved into work among Overseas Students.

In 1988 Miss MacKenzie married Rev. Gurnam Singh who had come to Glasgow to help with the work among the Asian Community and in 1989 was inducted to that work. So Duke Street was much involved in Missionary work in Glasgow.

A further link was established in 1983 when Miss Marie-Christine Lux from Belgium came to Glasgow to study at the Bible Training Institute. She attached herself to the Duke Street Congregation during her time in Glasgow and has remained ever since a Member of that Congregation and the subsequent ones Duke Street linked up with. At the end of 1984 Miss Lux went out to Peru under the Free Church and since then has served in various countries with Tear Fund finally 'retiring' in October 2002 when she returned to live in Glasgow.

During the 1980's large numbers of students from the north and the islands worshipped in Duke Street and it was good to see old and young mixing well. Many friendships were made during that period which have lasted over the years.

Over the years, in fact since 1798, despite the fact that the Congregation had moved on several occasions the name 'Duke Street Gaelic Free Church' had been retained. But this had caused confusion. There was still a 'Duke Street' in Glasgow but it was some distance away from where the Church was in Grant Street and had been since 1930 and so it was felt that the time had come to change the name to Grant Street Free Church and this became official in December 1984.

The Gaelic Service at 11.00am was still the main service of the Sabbath but as more and more of the Congregation were non Gaelic-speaking and more people were attending the English Service it was felt that the times should be moved around and the English be at 11.00am followed by the Gaelic at 12.30pm.

In May 1988 a series of Evangelistic Meetings was conducted by Rev. W.R. MacKay. It was forty years after the meetings he had conducted in 1948 when his preaching had been blessed to many and in 1988 the same was said again.

Over the years the condition of the Grant Street Building was giving cause for concern. Major repairs would have to be carried out and this would involve large sums of money. Various options were discussed including demolishing the building and rebuilding on the same site but the sum required would have been very high. Linkage was also suggested but at that point it was not considered an option. Many in the Congregation wished to remain separate but it became obvious for safety reason that it was going to be necessary to vacate the Grant Street building. Alternative accommodation was not easy to find but eventually it was arranged that the Congregation rent accommodation at the Renfield St. Stephen Church Centre in Bath Street and so the last service in Grant Street was held on Sabbath 7<sup>th</sup> January 1990 with the first in Bath Street being the Prayer Meeting on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 1990. This arrangement, though not entirely satisfactory, continued for several years but could not obviously be a permanent solution.

( The Grant Street building was finally demolished in 1992 )

Meanwhile the Govan Free Church Congregation had become vacant following the resignation of Rev. Colin MacIver and so the Glasgow Presbytery felt it would be a solution for both congregations if they were to unite. Govan had a building and no minister and the numbers had become very few and Grant Street had a minister but no building and a fairly good congregation. Again many in the Grant Street Congregation did not desire this. Reasons for not uniting were put forward and reasons for uniting were put forward. It was arranged that during September 1994 the two congregations would have a trial run and worship together in the Govan Church. The end result was that the Presbytery proposed that the Grant Street Congregation and the Govan Congregation be united and this took place as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 1995 with Rev. Donald N. MacLeod as Minister of the new congregation.

Following this it was felt that as it was in essence a new congregation it should have a new name and so on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1995 a Congregational Meeting was held and the name Briton Street Free Church was agreed on. This name reflected exactly where the church was situated. Previously the full title had been St. Columba Gaelic Free Church, Govan. And so the Congregation known as Grant Street Free Church, formerly known as Duke Street Gaelic Free Church, one of the oldest Congregations in the city, was no more.

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*Part 2*

*St. Columba Gaelic Free Church*



## St. COLUMBA GAELIC FREE CHURCH

At the time of the Disruption the spiritual needs of the Highlanders in the Govan area were met by the services provided by Govan Free Church, but it was not until 1862 that a petition was addressed to the Free Highland Committee requesting the provision of services in Gaelic for the Highlanders of that area. A meeting was held in Govan Free Church in April of that year to discuss the matter and although it appeared that the only solution would be to have a "Gaelic Territorial Church" - a Gaelic Church for that particular area - the Highland Committee and the Glasgow presbytery expressed doubts. Figures for 1863 showed that there were some 700 Gaelic speakers in the parish but doubts were expressed as to the extent of the demand for Gaelic services. The Presbytery was not keen to erect a new Gaelic Preaching Station but felt that the needs of the people could be met by the appointment of a Probationer who would hold two services every Sabbath - one during the day in Gaelic in a place to be rented by the people themselves and the other in Govan Free Church which the minister there agreed to let them have. This arrangement would provide for the needs of the Gaelic speakers although not quite in the way they had hoped.

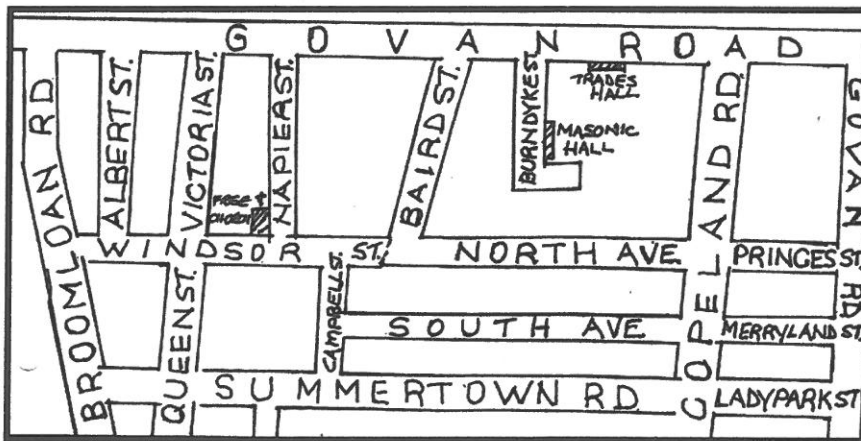
In 1863 a petition signed by 406 Highlanders in Govan requested the appointment of Rev. A.C. Fullerton who was highly rated as a Gaelic preacher. He had given two months supply but he did not want a longer appointment.

In 1865 the people then approached the Highland Committee requesting the appointment of a Lewis man, Mr. Murdo Macaskill, who was a Divinity Student. At that time he was doing mission work in Partick but the people in Govan managed to entice him away from there. After being in Govan for a year he decided that, instead of having Gaelic and English evening services turn about, that every evening service should be in English and the Gaelic speakers could have a district service on a Sunday evening if they preferred. Mr. MacAskill was a popular preacher and the opening services of a new church were held in September 1867. It was hoped that he would stay in Govan when he finished his



Divinity Course but as Govan was not a fully sanctioned charge and therefore did not pay a full ministerial salary he left for Glen Lyon in 1886.

In 1874 The Govan Free Gaelic Church was made a sanctioned charge and the first minister to be inducted was Rev. Allan Cameron. The original Free Church building was replaced with a new one in 1877 and was to be known as "St Columba Free Church, Govan" and was situated in Windsor Street.



GOVAN 1880

At the time of the 1900 Union the Minister of the Congregation was Rev. Evan Grant and he elected to join the union and took with him all but about 35 people.

The existence of the Free Church, however, was not to be lost and a group of men who did not go into the United Free Church got together and began to hold services in their own homes. This was the beginning of the Free Church in Govan after 1900.

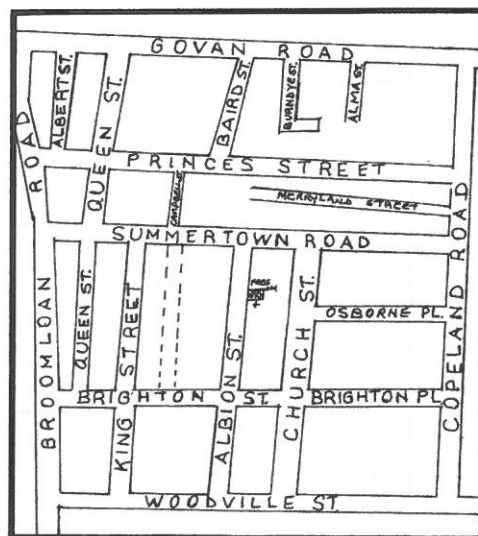
In January 1901 one of the men, Mr. John MacLean, took the case of the people in Govan to Rev. (later Principal) D. M'ulloch, then Minister of Hope Street Free Church who was very sympathetic towards them. He was appointed by the Glasgow Presbytery to the Pastoral Overcharge of Govan Free Church. District visitation was carried out in the area to find the people who still adhered to the Free Church and as a result the people began to hold services in the Trades Hall at 555 Govan Road and Edinburgh promised to send supply.

The Congregation was made up of the Govan Free Church folk together with others who had not joined the Union from the MacDonald Memorial Church. There were also some of the original Govan Free Church people, who although they had gone into the United Free Church, wished to have Gaelic services and so attended the Free Church in the evenings.

In April 1903 Govan Free Church was raised to the status of a Congregation of the Free Church and Principal M'Culloch was appointed Interim Moderator. The Gaelic Service was the main one at 11.00am, with English at 12 noon and at 6.00pm.

To begin with, the Royal Commission, when allocating buildings between the churches, had allocated the church on Windsor Street to the Free Church and so the Congregation gave up the Trades Hall but this was later reversed and Windsor Street Church was taken from them. They had to find a new place to hold their services and rented the Masonic Hall in Burndyke Street with the first services in July 1907.

Looking to the future the Deacons' Court took the first steps to finding a site for the erection of a permanent church building and so they approached Rev. Hendry Carmichael, Coatbridge, who had a great interest in Govan and with his help two sites were identified. The one chosen was between Church Street and Albion Street (now Clynder Street and Briton Street).



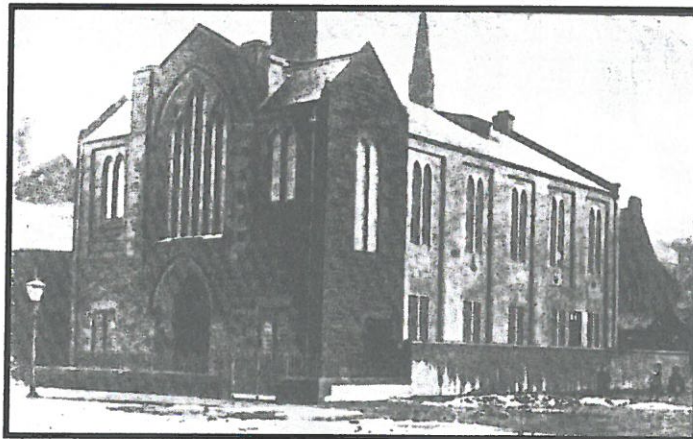
**GOVAN 1900**

Help was sought and received from Central Funds in Edinburgh in the form of a grant and loan. The foundation stone was laid on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June 1909, the ceremony being performed by Principal M'Culloch and the full name of St. Columba Gaelic Free Church, Govan was retained.



**GOVAN FREE CHURCH**

The church was completed and ready for use by the end of January 1910 with the first services being held on Sabbath 7<sup>th</sup> February 1910.



**GOVAN FREE CHURCH**

The Congregation was without a settled pastor until 1913 when Rev. Farquhar Matheson was ordained and inducted on 23<sup>rd</sup> September. He was a native of Plockton and had won for himself an excellent reputation during his student days. Public worship was conducted at 3.00pm by Rev. Adam Hunter, Rothesay, who carried through the Ordination and Induction of the new minister. The Congregation was addressed by Rev. Peter Clarkson, Govanhill.

An evening gathering was held with Principal M'Culloch presiding when presentations were made to the newly inducted pastor, to Principal & Mrs. M'Culloch, the Principal having guided the Congregation through the long vacancy. Presentations were made to others in the Congregation in appreciation of their work. Rev. Matheson was introduced to his new Congregation on Sabbath 28<sup>th</sup> September 1913 by Rev. Finlay MacRae, Plockton.



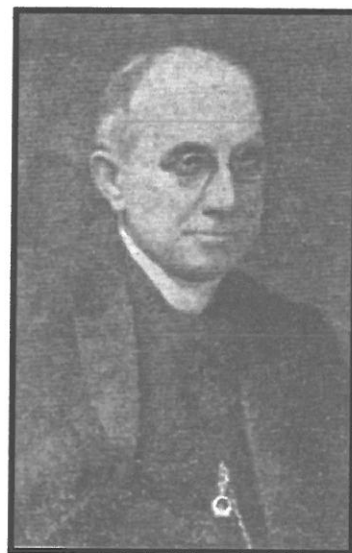
Rev. Farquhar Matheson

It was said at the time "The Congregation have had their baptism of fire and none are the worse for their experience." Rev. Matheson remained as pastor of the Congregation until 1920 when he accepted a call to Stoer. When he died in 1959 the Minister of the Govan Congregation at that time said that it was with deep regret that they learned of the death of that shy and kindly man.

Early on in the life of the Congregation Psalmody Classes were started, the first of these as early as 1911 and an average of thirty young people attended each week. In 1931 a junior class was started. In 1920 the young people of the Congregation asked the Kirk Session for permission to start a meeting for themselves and this was granted on condition that it would be called the 'Youth Fellowship'. There are still those who can remember those happy days.

The Congregation was again vacant until 1924 when Rev. William Fraser, Inverness, accepted the call to be Pastor. The church was completely filled for the occasion on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> August when Rev. W. M'Leod, Greenock, presided and preached

taking as his text 2 Corinthians 4 v 4. In speaking to the Congregation Col. Rounsfel Brown appealed, especially to the young, to realize their relationship and responsibility to the Free Church as a whole. He recalled that at 1900 the Free Church had only 26 ministers but now they had 87. Then there were only 91 congregations but now 185. They had retained their interest in missionary work with missions in India, Africa and South America and had five congregations in Canada. They were no longer the "Wee Frees" but a big and growing church.



Rev. William Fraser

This part of the proceedings ended with the Benediction by Rev. William M'Leod. The usual presentations were then made with Mr. Fraser being presented with a wallet of notes by Mr. John Leitch and Mrs. Fraser with a silver service and salver by Mrs. MacInnes. In reply, Mr. Fraser said he felt at a loss for words to express his feelings. The Congregation had shown great kindness to him and he was already attached to them more than he had ever thought possible in such a short time. A presentation was then made to the Interim Moderator. Principal M'Culloch expressed his pleasure at seeing a minister settled over the Congregation again and at seeing such a large attendance for the Induction.

During Rev. Fraser's time as Minister, a Mission from Govan was started in Paisley and the first service was conducted by Mr. Fraser on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1931. The Mission was raised to the status of a congregation in 1947 and is known as Paisley Free Church.

Rev. Fraser remained as Pastor of the Congregation until May 1938 when he accepted a call to the congregation of Kiltarlity – his native parish. There were many expressions of regret at his departure and after the Evening Service on the Sabbath prior to his departure

very many waited outside to bid their Minister farewell. Rev. and Mrs. Fraser were recipients of many gifts from the Congregation as they left for Kiltarlity. He had been their Minister for fourteen years.

In November of the same year a call was addressed to Rev. Murdoch MacRae, Kinloch, but he turned it down. The vacancy was filled on April 7<sup>th</sup> 1939 when Rev. Alex MacLeod, Cross, Lewis was inducted to the charge of St. Columba Free Church, Govan. He was of a quiet nature and in his preaching great comfort was given to the Christain but his greatest concern was for those outside the Kingdom.

His time as Pastor was not easy being over the war years and in February 1941 the Congregation was very sad to learn of the death of Mr. Alex MacLean who was an elder in the Congregation. He and his wife and two sons and two daughters were killed in an air raid in the Midlands. He had grown up in the Congregation and his father had been one of the founders.

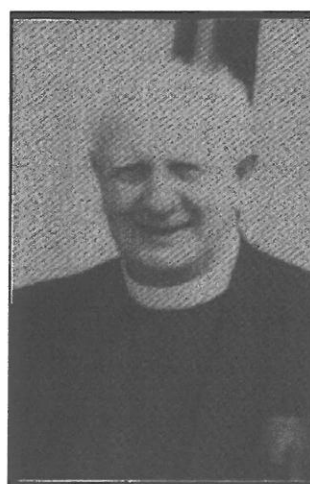


Rev. A. MacLeod

In 1947 Rev. MacLeod accepted a Call to the Back Congregation in Lewis

Once again the Govan Free Church was vacant and remained so until 14<sup>th</sup> October 1949 when Rev. Murdo MacAulay was ordained and inducted.

For the occasion both the Church and the Hall were packed, with those in the Hall hearing the proceedings by loudspeaker. The Moderator took his text for the evening from 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1 v 22 – 24. Rev. Murdo MacAulay was then solemnly ordained and inducted to the charge of St. Columba Free Church, Govan. Rev. R. Christie, Saltcoats, addressed the new Minister and Rev. Angus MacDonald, Coatbridge, the Congregation. The usual presentations were then made, first to the new Minister by Mr. John MacLean, Session Clerk and then



Rev. Murdo MacAulay

to Mrs. MacAulay who received a silver tea service from Mrs. MacKinnon. An inscribed Bible was presented to Donald Iain. The Interim Moderator Rev. A. MacDougall also received a gift.

Mr. MacAulay was introduced to his new Congregation on the following Sabbath by Rev. A. MacLeod, Back.

Rev. MacAulay remained as Minister until the spring of 1956 when he accepted a call to the Congregation of Back following in the footsteps of Rev. MacLeod who had been the Minister of the Govan Congregation before him and the Congregation met on 5<sup>th</sup> April to say farewell. Rev. M. Morrison, Partick Highland, who had just been appointed Interim Moderator chaired the gathering. In his remarks he said that Mr. MacAulay's work in Govan had indeed been blessed and during his time 40 names were added to the Communion Roll. As a Pastor he was never idle and was compassionate and sympathetic to all. Rev. Morrison then assured the Congregation that Mr. MacAulay would never forget them. There was something about a first charge that distinguished it from all others. Speeches were made by various people in the Congregation and presentations were made to Rev. & Mrs. MacAulay and Donald. Rev. MacAulay thanked the Congregation for their kindness to himself and his family and asked them to remember him in prayer. After the Benediction Mr. & Mrs. MacAulay shook hands with everyone present.

It was to be another two years before the Congregation had a pastor settled over them. On 8<sup>th</sup> July 1958 the Glasgow Presbytery met in the Govan Church for the induction of Rev. John Morrison, formerly of Strath, Skye. Rev. N. MacLeod, Partick conducted public worship and preached from 2 Corinthians chap. 5 v 20 & 21. After answering the usual questions put on such an occasion Rev. John Morrison was formally inducted to the pastoral charge of St. Columba Gaelic Free Church, Govan. Rev. A. Fraser, Kilwinning, addressed the new Minister saying that Rev. Morrison was no novice to the ministry with years of experience but pointed out that it was a difficult task to fulfill a ministry in

a large city like Glasgow. When Rev. Malcolm Morrison, Interim Moderator, addressed the Congregation he reminded them of their duty to one another and to their Minister.

Presentations were made to Rev. Morrison by Mr. John Mackay and to Mrs. Morrison in the form of a silver tea service. The Morrison children received Bibles. Rev. Morrison expressed thanks on behalf of himself and his family. The Interim Moderator also received a gift in recognition of his help given during the vacancy.



Rev. John Morrison

The meeting was closed with praise and the benediction.

Rev. Morrison was a quiet, modest person and it was said that modesty was the outstanding feature of his life as a pastor and minister. Falling numbers affected the Govan Congregation in the same way as it had in other places as many of the houses in the area around the Church were pulled down and people moved away.

Rev. Morrison remained as Minister until his retirement in 1979. On 20<sup>th</sup> June the Congregation met in the Church to bid him farewell and they were joined by many friends for the occasion.

Rev. Murdo Martin, Paisley, was the preacher for the evening and took as his text 1 Corinthians chap. 15. Following public worship all were invited to the nearby Trinity Church Hall for an excellent buffet prepared by the ladies of the Congregation. Rev. Martin took the chair and several speeches were made including one by Rev. Douglas MacMillan in which he expressed the high regard for Mr. Morrison's labour in the ministry. Mr. Duncan Martin, Elder, presented Mr. Morrison with a gift from the Congregation and in a speech by Miss Elizabeth MacKinnon thanks were paid to Mrs. Morrison for her interest in the Congregation over the years. Mrs. Morrison also received a gift from Miss Carol Martin. In his speech of thanks Rev. Morrison thanked the Congregation for their kindness and spoke of his deep sorrow at having to retire. The evening was brought to a close with the singing of part of Psalm 122 and the Benediction. Rev. Morrison had been their Minister for 21 years the longest time of any of the



ministers of the Congregation. He retired to his native Lewis and passed away after a short illness in August 1981.

The Congregation was vacant until September 1981 when Rev. Colin MacIver, another Lewis man, was ordained and inducted to the Govan charge. The event took place on 8<sup>th</sup> September before a large gathering including many friends. Rev. Alasdair Johnston, Dumbarton, presided and preached from John chap 6 v 6. After answering the questions put to a minister on such an occasion Rev. Colin MacIver was ordained to the office of the Holy Ministry with the laying on of the hands of the Brethren. Rev. Peter Jackson, Milton, addressed the new Minister and Rev. Murdo Martin, Paisley, the Congregation. The devotional part of the evening was brought to a close with the singing of part of Psalm 72 and the Benediction. It was then time for the presentations to be made first to Rev. MacIver by Capt. Angus MacLeod, to Mrs. MacIver by Mrs. Finlayson and to the MacIver children by Miss Peggy MacLeod. In thanking the Congregation Rev. MacIver expressed his thankfulness to God for bringing him to that day when he was ordained and inducted to the Ministry and earnestly requested the prayers of the people. All present were then invited to the tea provided by the ladies of the Congregation which was taking place in the neighbouring Trinity Church Hall kindly lent for the evening.



Rev. Colin MacIver

Up to this point in time the main Service at 11.00am was still in Gaelic but in 1982 it was decided to stop the Gaelic Service altogether and have English at 11.00am.

The Govan Congregation continued its witness in that part of the city but numbers were falling rapidly and when Rev. MacIver resigned in 1992 the numbers were very low. The small band of people carried on as best they could but it soon became apparent that they faced problems remaining as a separate charge. It was at this time that the

possibility of the St. Columba Congregation uniting with the Grant Street Congregation began to be discussed. St. Columba had a building, no minister and a very small Congregation while Grant Street had a Minister and a fairly good Congregation but were worshipping in temporary accommodation, so following discussions with the Kirk Sessions and the Presbytery it was agreed that the two unite using the St. Columba Church Building with Rev. Donald N. MacLeod as the Minister. This officially took place on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1995 following a trial time of worshipping together in late 1994. It was then felt that as it was in essence a new Congregation it should have a new name that did not reflect the Grant Street element or the St. Columba element so, at a Congregational meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1995, the new name of Briton Street Free Church was agreed on. This name also indicted just where the Church was situated.

And so the name of St. Columba Gaelic Free Church, Govan faded into the history books.

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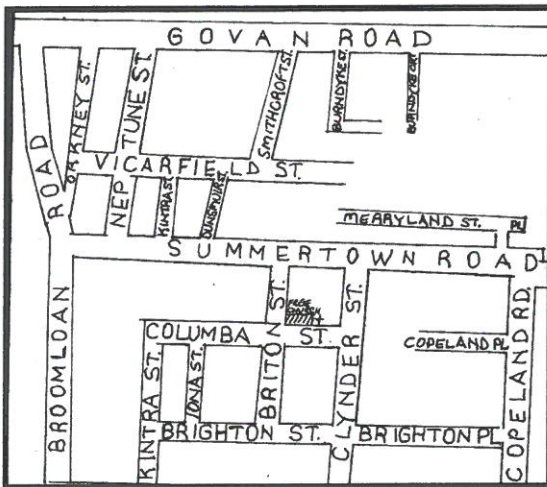
*Part 3*

*Briton Street Free Church*



## BRITON STREET FREE CHURCH

Briton Street Free Church Congregation came into being following the union of the two Congregations of Grant Street Free Church and St. Columba Gaelic Free Church, Govan. This took place on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1995 and Rev. Donald MacLeod, formerly Minister of the Grant Street Congregation was the Minister. The two Kirk Sessions became one as did the Deacons' Courts. Although the Congregation was worshipping in the St. Columba Free Church building it was agreed that the name of the Congregation be changed and this was done at a meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1995 when the name 'Briton Street Free Church' was agreed, thus reflecting exactly where the Church was situated.



**Briton Street Free Church**



The union seemed to work well and the activities of the Congregation carried on as normal. The Sabbath School was restarted and Congregational outings over and above the Sabbath School Outing were started and proved to be very successful.

Shortly after the two Congregations linking, some of the local children used to gather outside the Church at the close of the morning service and it was felt that here was a great opportunity to reach these children with the Gospel and so a meeting was started for them. To begin with it was held just before the evening service but was later changed to 1.00pm and this has continued over the years. The meetings are still held and are known as the Briton Street Sunday Club.

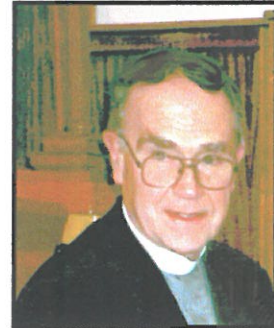


**BRITON STREET FREE CHURCH**

Due to falling numbers at the Gaelic Service at 12.30pm this was discontinued and a monthly service was held at 5.00pm.

In the summer of 1999 Rev. Donald MacLeod intimated his intention to retire from the Congregation at the end of September of that year. He had been pastor since 1980 and had been a minister in the Free Church since 1972. A farewell service was held on 8<sup>th</sup> October to mark the occasion. Rev. John A. Gillies, Partick Highland, who took as his text Isaiah Chap.12 v 1-2, conducted the service. After public worship, presentations were made to Rev. MacLeod, in the form of a gold watch and a wallet of notes, by Mr. Iain MacPherson and to Mrs. MacLeod, in the form of a silver necklace, by Mrs. Isa

Smith. Mrs. Christina MacLean also presented Mrs. MacLeod with a bouquet of flowers and Miss Ruth Martin presented Mrs. MacLeod with a camera on behalf of the young people of the Congregation. Following that part of the proceedings all were invited to the Hall where a sumptuous sit-down meal was prepared. Several speeches were made by colleagues of Rev. MacLeod. And so ended a very happy time between Pastor and Congregation. Rev. MacLeod had brought the Congregation through some difficult times and it was their prayer that he would enjoy a long and happy retirement.




Rev. Donald MacLeod

Service Commemorating  
the Retirement  
of  
Rev. Donald N MacLeod

October 8th 1999

Free Church Minister  
of the Gospel:

Lochbroom 1972-1980  
Glasgow Grant Street 1980-1995  
Glasgow Briton Street 1995-1999

The seal of the Free Church of Scotland, featuring a central figure holding a cross, surrounded by the text "FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND" and "1843".



As rumblings of discontent began to be felt throughout the Free Church as a whole, Briton Street did not escape this unrest.

Following Rev. MacLeod's retirement Rev. Harry Woods, Paisley, was appointed Interim Moderator but when the Secession took place only a few months later in January 2000, Mr. Woods and many of the Congregation left the Free Church. Rev. Angus MacRae, Kilwinning, was then appointed Interim Moderator. Over the coming months with the reduced numbers it was becoming evident that it would be difficult to continue as a separate charge. Glasgow was badly affected by the Secession leaving several congregations without ministers and so, after considering several options, it was decided that the best course of action would be for Briton Street, Drumchapel and Partick Highland to all go together and form a new congregation. The Congregation would worship in the Partick Highland building and would have one Kirk Session and one Deacons' Court. A new name was given to the Congregation – Dowanvale Free Church. The Congregation began worshipping together in October 2000 and this was officially approved at the October 2000 Commission of Assembly.

And so another Free Church Congregation and a very 'young' one at that was assigned to the history books.

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*Part 4*

*Drumchapel Free Church*



## DRUMCHAPEL FREE CHURCH

Drumchapel, to the north west of the city of Glasgow, was one of the housing schemes set up by Glasgow Council during the 1950's when many of the older properties in the city were becoming unsuitable for the needs of the people. Many of the people who moved to the new houses in Drumchapel had originally come from the Partick area. Some attended Crow Road Free Church where Rev. Neil MacLeod was the Minister. About October 1956, when Rev. MacLeod was visiting Mr. & Mrs. MacDonald of Glenkirk Drive in Drumchapel and who attended Crow Road Free Church, they expressed the wish that Free Church services could be held somewhere in Drumchapel as it was quite a distance for their children to travel to Crow Road. Rev. Macleod told them that he also had a desire to reach out to the people there, and so the beginnings of Free Church Services in Drumchapel were set in motion. To begin with, the services were held in the MacDonald's home with other families joining them for worship. Mr. & Mrs. MacInnes of Drumry Road then offered to have services in their home for a spell, but after that it was felt that, as the numbers were increasing, they should look to the possibility of hiring a room in one of the schools, and so from about the middle of December 1956 a service was held at 3.00pm each Sabbath in Drumry School.

Rev. Neil MacLeod had the oversight of the new Congregation but many of the city ministers helped in conducting these services and this arrangement continued until November 1958 when Rev. John MacLeod, the Free Church Evangelist, who was operating the Highways & Byways Caravan, came to conduct the Services during the



Rev. John MacLeod

winter months and also to minister in the housing scheme.

With this more permanent arrangement it was felt that it would be good to be able to have a service morning and evening rather than mid afternoon, so the next move was to the Scout Hall in Invercanny Drive. During the severe weather of that winter, however, it did not prove to be too suitable.

The Monthly Record of December 1958 included a notice informing people in the Drumchapel district and neighboring places such as Clydebank that services were being held each Sabbath in the Scout Hall, Invercanny Drive at 11.00am and 6.30pm conducted by Rev. John MacLeod and also that a Sabbath School had begun at 3.00pm in the school in Drumry Road.

In December 1958 Hope Street Free Church, having acquired a large sum of money, expressed the wish to help the Congregation in Drumchapel and so a meeting was held in Crow Road Free Church Hall. The facts were put to the people of the Drumchapel Congregation and as a result it was agreed that the Drumchapel Congregation would now form part of the Hope Street Congregation and despite the fact that they themselves (Hope Street) had no church building at that time they would make the funds available for a new church to be built in Drumchapel.



**Drumchapel Sabbath School 1959**

In February 1959 at the annual congregational meeting of Hope Street a presentation was made to Rev. John Macleod in appreciation of his valued services in Drumchapel. During his time in Glasgow he had concentrated on the vast new housing scheme of Drumchapel and the Congregation there was now an integral part of Hope Street. Regular services were held on Sabbath and weekdays and as a result of diligent pastoral visitation some sixty families were now attending and the Sabbath School had a role of forty-two children.



After Rev. MacLeod's departure the services continued in the Scout Hall, conducted mostly by Rev. Harry Whittington who had come out of retirement to help the folks in Drumchapel.

Rev. H. Whittington.

A start was made on the new church building in Invercanny Drive in August 1959 though problems at the site put a stop to that until November of that year.



Drumchapel Church Under Way

At that point the Congregation, following some problems at the Scout Hall, moved back to Drumry School for their services and remained there until the new church was ready for use.

In the meantime Mr. Fergus MacDonald (son of Rev. J.A. MacDonald, Kiltearn) was about to finish his studies at the Free Church College. He intended going to the Mission Field but that would not be happening for sometime and so the Hope Street Congregation made the suggestion that they ask him to work in Drumchapel and that they would make the necessary finance available. And so a petition was made to the General Assembly in May 1960 that Rev. Fergus A.J. MacDonald be ordained as Assistant Minister of Hope Street Free Church for the special purpose of Pastoral and Church Extension work in Drumchapel. They told the Assembly that they had offered to take the Drumchapel Congregation under their wing and that they had contributed £12,000 for the erection of the new church. Rev. Macdonald had intimated that he was prepared to give at least one year's service in Drumchapel. The Petition was granted and Rev. MacDonald started his ministry on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1960.

The first child connected with the Congregation to be baptized was the son of Mr. & Mrs. MacKay and that took place on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1960.

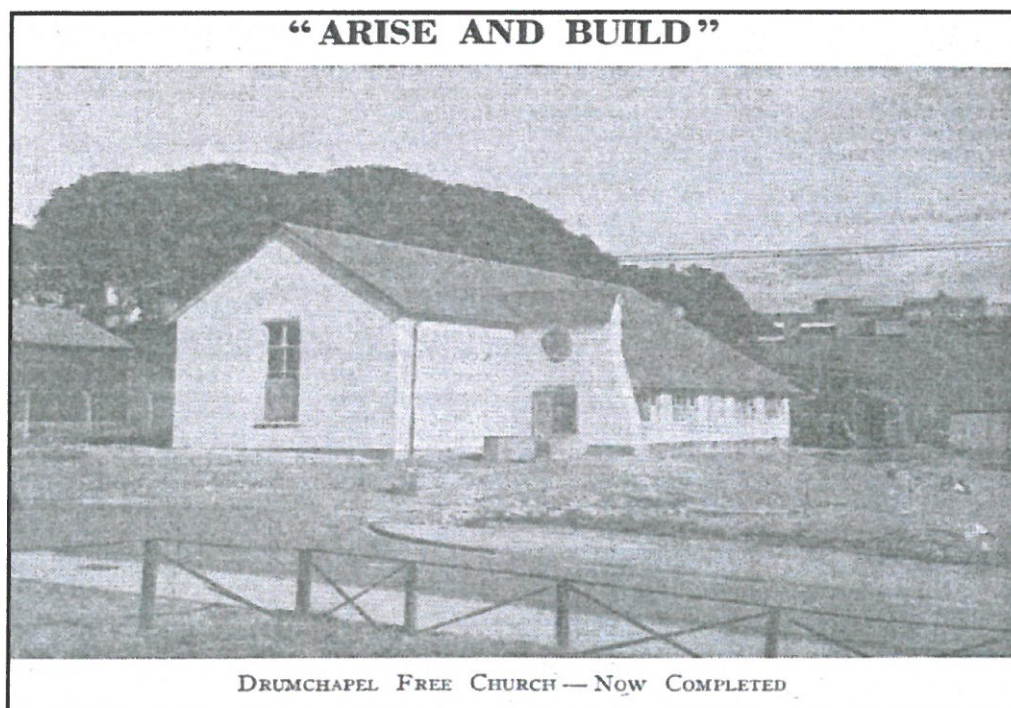


Rev. Fergus MacDonald

The building work was all this time going on and by 30<sup>th</sup> September 1960 the work was more or less completed and the Church ready for opening. For almost a year the people had watched the building going up. They had watched and many prayed and believed that God had a special work to do in it. From the outset there had been problems, not least the vandalism to which it was constantly subjected and which was to prove a real problem in the years to come. However, the day had come when it would be officially opened. It was an attractive building with seating for some 350 people and was filled to capacity for the first service which was conducted by Rev. Dr. A.M. Renwick, who was Moderator of the Assembly that year. He took as his text Genesis 12 v 8. Rev. MacDougall Minister of Hope Street Free Church gave a narrative of the events leading up to the opening that day mentioning the work done by Rev. Neil MacLeod, Rev. John MacLeod and Rev Harry Whittington. He also mentioned the invaluable help given by those who had volunteered to teach in the Sabbath School and lead the praise. The architects, surveyors and contractors were not forgotten. The Congregation could see for

themselves that they had a lovely church, now completed, despite the difficulties they had experienced. Mr. W. Smith was then called to make a presentation to Rev. Whittington in appreciation of his services among them. Somewhat taken by surprise Rev. Whittington thanked them for their unexpected gift and then led in prayer committing the new Church to God's service and glory.

The following Sabbath the services were conducted by Rev. Hugh MacKay, Aberdeen, and he also addressed the Sabbath School and presented each child with a Bible, commemorating the Reformation, from Hope Street Church.



On 4<sup>th</sup> October 1960 the Glasgow Presbytery met in the new church to ordain Rev. Fergus A.J. MacDonald. Rev. A. Johnstone, Dumbarton, presided and preached and took as his text Malachi Chap 2 v 6. Having answered the usual questions put at such an occasion Rev. MacDonald was solemnly ordained by the laying on of hands by the Presbytery Ministers and those from other parts who had associated themselves with the Presbytery for the evening, including Rev. MacDonald's father.



Rev. A.R. Fraser addressed both the new minister and the Congregation. Mr. W. Smith then made the Congregation's presentation to Rev. MacDonald. The service was brought to a close with the Benediction.

Thus ended the first weekend in the history of Drumchapel Free Church.

The first Communion Services in Drumchapel were held in March 1961 when the preacher was Rev. J.A. MacDonald, Kiltarn, and on the Sabbath Evening he took as his text 2 Samuel 1 v 26.

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 1961 was a special day for the Drumchapel Congregation when their Minister married Miss Dolina MacKay, the wedding taking place in the Church. On the previous Saturday a pleasant meeting was held when they were presented with gifts from the Congregation and the Youth Fellowship.

By March 1962 all the necessary arrangements had been made for Rev. & Mrs. MacDonald to leave for service in Peru and a meeting was held in Drumchapel Church on March 13<sup>th</sup> to extend to them the good wishes of the Congregation and other friends on the eve of their departure. The Church was packed and extra chairs had to be brought in. Rev. Peter Jackson, Milton, was in the Chair. Rev. A. MacDonald, Coatbridge, praised Mr. MacDonald for the good work he had done in Drumchapel and conveyed the good wishes of the Presbytery. Prof. W.J. Cameron, Free Church College, also paid tribute to Mr. MacDonald's industry and diligence in Drumchapel. During the meeting Mrs. H. Campbell, on behalf of the Congregation, presented Mr. MacDonald with a wallet of notes and wished him much blessing in the future. Mr. MacDonald replied, thanking the Congregation for their kindness and said that while he regretted leaving Drumchapel he felt constrained to obey the call to serve his master on the foreign field. He asked them to remember him and his wife in their prayers.

Mr. MacDonald preached his farewell sermon on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1962 and left for Peru on 19<sup>th</sup> March.

When the departure of Rev. MacDonald left the Congregation in Drumchapel vacant one

of the students from the College in Edinburgh, William Graham, who had spent some time working in Drumchapel in the autumn of 1961, and had taken Services for Rev. MacDonald was asked to take the services again. The College had just introduced a new rule that students should spend two months under the guidance of a minister and so it



Mr. W. Graham

was arranged that Mr. Graham would serve in Drumchapel under the guidance of the Hope Street Kirk Session. The Drumchapel Congregation knew at that time that Rev. Hector Cameron who was minister in Lybster was keen to try working in a housing scheme and so when Mr. Graham's two months were up he was prevailed upon to stay until Rev. Cameron would come. Various meetings

were held with the Congregation under the guidance of Rev. Peter Jackson, Milton, who was at that point Interim Moderator of Hope Street, with the result that a petition was made to the 1962 General Assembly that Rev. Hector Cameron be released from his charge in Lybster in order that he could become Assistant Minister in Hope Street with special duties in Drumchapel. The petition was granted. After some initial problems in securing a house suitable for a manse one was purchased in Jordanhill and the Induction of Rev. Hector Cameron to the charge of Drumchapel Free Church took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1962.



Rev. Hector Cameron

The Moderator of Presbytery, Rev. Donald Gibson, presided and preached from 2 Kings chap 5 v 3 and Rev. A.G. Ross addressed the Congregation. Several ministers from Mr. Cameron's previous Presbytery were able to join with the Drumchapel Congregation for the occasion. The proceedings were brought to a close with the singing of Psalm 133 led by Mr. MacDonald of Hope Street.

The following evening the Congregation, along with many friends met in a social capacity when Rev. & Mrs. Cameron and family were welcomed to the Congregation. Mr. W. Smith presented Rev. Cameron with a wallet of notes and Miss Catherine Nicolson made presentations to Mrs. Cameron and the family. A presentation was also

made to Mr. Graham in appreciation of all the work he had done in Drumchapel since the departure of Rev. Fergus MacDonald.

As the work went on in Drumchapel it became the feeling that Drumchapel Free Church should be recognized as an independent congregation and not just as an outreach of Hope Street and the petition which was put before the Assembly in May 1965 was granted. This in effect meant that Drumchapel Free Church had no minister as Rev. Cameron was Hope Street's Assistant. The Glasgow Presbytery appointed Rev. Neil MacLeod, Duke Street, as Interim Moderator with Assessor Elders to form a Kirk Session. In June 1965 a Congregational Meeting was held to sign a call to Rev. Hector Cameron and was presented to him, but the Congregation in Wick had also presented him with a call and he accepted it, which left Drumchapel vacant yet again.

A farewell meeting was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November when Rev. & Mrs. Cameron were presented with gifts from the Congregation, Youth Club and the ladies of the Congregation. Gifts were also given for the Cameron children who were not able to be present.

Rev. Cameron conducted his final service the following Sabbath when he thanked the Congregation for their kindness during his time with them.

A Vacancy Committee was formed early in 1966 with a view to the charge being filled as soon as possible. A call was addressed to Rev. Murdo Nicolson, Urray, but after giving it careful consideration he felt led to decline it.

The feeling then in the Congregation was that they should look towards giving a call to one of the students who would finish the College Course that year and would be licensed to preach after the General Assembly. A further meeting of the Congregation was held in June 1966 and a call was addressed to Rev. Murdo Alex MacLeod whose father had been the minister in Govan Free Church in the 1940's. He accepted the Call and his ordination and induction to the charge of Drumchapel Free Church was fixed for 23<sup>rd</sup> September. Rev. Murdo Martin, Paisley, presided and preached taking his text 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2 v 4. Rev. John Morrison, Govan, addressed the new Minister and Rev. Neil MacLeod, Duke



Rev. M.A. MacLeod

Street, the Congregation. The usual presentations were made to the new Minister and his wife and also to the Interim Moderator for his help in the Congregation.

The following Sabbath Rev. MacLeod began his ministry in Drumchapel as their first Minister since they received full status. He was introduced at the Morning Service by Rev. John Morrison and preached himself in the evening from Romans 1 v 15 – 17.

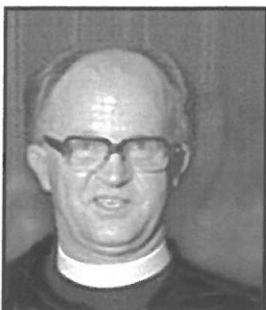
And so another milestone in the life of the Congregation had been reached.

Up to this point the Congregation did not have Office Bearers of its own but Assessor Elders from various congregations in the Presbytery so it was felt that it was now time to appoint Elders and Deacons of their own. These were duly elected and at the close of the Evening Service on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1967 they were ordained to the respective offices. The elders were Messrs. W. Smith, D. MacKay, T. MacLeod and D. Smith and the Deacons N. MacLean, D. MacInnes and A. MacKinnon. Mr. T. MacLeod was the first Session Clerk and Mr. W. Smith the first Clerk to the Deacons' Court.

None of the previous Ministers in Drumchapel had remained there for any length of time and the ministry of Rev. MacLeod was to follow the same pattern as in early 1972 he received and accepted a call from Dingwall Free Church and preached his final service in Drumchapel on 13<sup>th</sup> February. At the close of the Wednesday Prayer Meeting that week Mr. T MacLeod who wished him God's Blessing in his new sphere of service presented Rev. MacLeod with a cheque. This brought to a close the good five and a half years of ministry Rev. MacLeod had given to the Drumchapel Congregation. Now it was vacant again and Rev. D. MacLeod, Partick Highland, was appointed Interim Moderator.

The vacancy this time was longer as it was not until July 1973 that a call was given to Rev. Ronald Graham, a recently licensed final year student and his Ordination and Induction took place on 19<sup>th</sup> September. The Church was filled to capacity for the occasion when Rev. Fergus MacDonald, having returned from Peru and now minister

of Cumbernauld, presided and preached taking his text from 2 Corinthians 12 v 12 & 13.



Rev. Ronald Graham

Rev. Neil MacLeod addressed the new Minister and Rev. Donald MacLeod the Congregation. Presentations to the new Minister were made in the usual manner and Rev. D. MacLeod was also asked to accept a gift from the Congregation in appreciation of all he had done for them during the vacancy. In accepting the gift he said he had been happy to help them and was pleased to see a minister settled over them again. After the Benediction the people

gathered socially for tea provided by the ladies of the Congregation.

The following Sabbath Rev. Duncan Beaton, Leith, introduced Mr. Graham who took the Evening Service himself.

Rev. & Mrs. Graham had previously spent time in the Ivory Coast with U.F.M.

A meeting held in St. Vincent Free Church on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November 1976 was of special interest to the people of the Drumchapel Congregation. Mr. Donald Smith who had been a member in the Congregation was Ordained to the Ministry and Inducted as a Missionary for work in Peru. Rev. Robert Christie, Saltcoats, addressed the new Minister giving him valuable advice from God's Word and the wealth of his own experience.

30<sup>th</sup> September 1981 was a special day for the people of the Drumchapel Free Church as it was on this date 21 years previously that the Church was opened for worship and the Prayer Meeting that evening took the form of a Thanksgiving Service. Rev. Alasdair Johnston conducted the service as Rev. Graham was on sick leave from the Presbytery. Rev. Fergus MacDonald who was now with The National Bible Society of Scotland also took part and Rev. Alasdair Gollan, Greenock, led the Congregation in prayer. The company also enjoyed two performances of singing by the Glasgow Psalm Singers. A vote of thanks was given by Rev. John MacKay, Livingston, to all who had taken part. The large gathering was then invited to join the Congregation for tea.

Rev. Ronald Graham did not enjoy good health and by 1984 felt he could no longer continue as pastor of the Congregation so on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1984 the Congregation met for a Service of Thanksgiving for his ministry. The Interim Moderator, Rev. Alasdair Johnston

preached from Hebrews 11 v 22-24. After worship the Congregation moved to the Hall where tea was served and following this Mr. Donald Smith was called on to present a gift to Rev. Graham in appreciation of his ministry over nearly ten years and reminded the gathering that it was only illness which deprived them of their minister. It gave the Congregation encouragement to still have Rev. & Mrs. Graham worshipping with them. In his words of thanks Mr. Graham explained that after a great deal of prayer he was finally persuaded that it was the only step to take and the proper course to follow. Marie Cameron graciously presented Mrs. Graham with a bouquet of flowers.

This time the Congregation was not long vacant as on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1984 the Glasgow Presbytery met in the Drumchapel Church for the Ordination and Induction of Rev. Alasdair MacDonald, Rev. John MacCallum being the preacher for the occasion.



The new Minister was addressed by Rev. Maurice Roberts, Ayr, and the Congregation by Rev. A. Johnston.

Mr. Alastair MacKinnon presented the Congregation's gift to their new Minister and Rev. J.A. Gillies, Partick Highland, made a presentation on behalf of that congregation which had been Mr. MacDonald's "Home Congregation" as a token of the high regard they had for him. He had fulfilled various duties during

Rev. A. MacDonald

his time there. Mrs. MacDonald accepted a Bible for Joanne from the Sabbath School. Rev. MacDonald then expressed his thanks to the Drumchapel Congregation, now his own, and also to Partick Highland for their kindness. Rev. A. Johnston was also asked to accept a gift in thankfulness for his faithful service to the Congregation. The capacity congregation then enjoyed a buffet supper.

In 1984 the Drumchapel Congregation was made an "Outreach" Charge. At that time there were twenty three Members and the attendances varied between thirty and forty with the people being very supportive and active in the Outreach Work. As far as could be ascertained all "Free Church" people in the Drumchapel area were attending church so the Outreach was directed towards local people. Over the following years several Missions were held – three Highways and Byways Missions along with various other

events - Meetings in the Community Centre, Mothers Meetings, Youth Work, Tract Distribution and House Visitation - but visible results were poor with no response at all after 4,000 invitations were given out. The most heartening was the children's work, and a "Saturday Club" was started with the help of the young people of the Congregation and helpers from other congregations. Encouraging as this was it was acknowledged that this would not be a means of building up the Congregation in terms of those attending the Services. It would be a long-term work in such a needy area. During the following years the Congregation, rather than growing, diminished.

Late in 1998 Rev. Alasdair MacDonald received and accepted a call from Dunblane Free Church and was inducted to that charge in January 1999. Rev. D.N. MacLeod was appointed Interim Moderator and the activities of the Congregation continued.

Following the Secession in January 2000 Rev. Duncan Peters was appointed Interim Moderator but it soon became obvious that the Drumchapel Free Church Congregation was not going to be able to carry on as a separate charge and the decision was made that it would link with the Partick Highland Congregation and this became effective in October 2000.

The Drumchapel Congregation was one of the 'newer' congregations in the city but now like a few others it was passing into the history books of the Free Church Of Scotland.

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*Part 5*

*Partick Highland Free Church*





## PARTICK HIGHLAND FREE CHURCH

The village of Partick was originally part of the Govan Parish and if the villagers wanted to attend church services, baptisms, weddings or funerals they had to cross the river to Govan. Around 1770, a petition had been presented by the people of Partick to have a church built on their side of the river as traveling to Govan presented problems - "Those last into the boat on the way over found the service almost over by the time they reached the church and on the way home there was such a rush to get into the boat that people were getting pushed into the water spoiling their clothes". This petition was refused and it was not until 1820 that any definite move was made to form a congregation on the north side of the river. In 1833 a meeting was held in connection with a proposal to erect a Chapel of Ease in Partick and, in 1834, Partick Church was erected on the site of the church now known as Partick South.

At the time of the Disruption, Partick was a village of some 2500 inhabitants but following the establishment of the shipbuilding yards this increased rapidly until by 1876 it had become a small town of some 35,000 inhabitants, much of the increase being due to the number of Highlanders who were coming south to find work. In 1844, the Free Church was established in the village and the first minister to be inducted to the charge was Rev Harry Anderson. He and his precentor were to remain together in Partick for fifty years. Many of the Highlanders who had come were Gaelic speakers and so by 1864 Partick Free Church was supporting a lot of mission work in the district done by Gaelic-speaking divinity students, one of whom was Murdo MacAskill, before he was enticed by the church in Govan to go there.

By 1873, however, these Highlanders wanted something more permanent so a petition was put to the Free Assembly Highland Committee requesting funds to support a Gaelic Missionary. Their request was granted and a grant of £5.00 was made for a student Missionary. This was upgraded the following year to a permanent Missionary with a grant of £10.00 and a further increase was made in 1875 to £20.00 in order that a Catechist could be engaged. The Mission flourished greatly with the people contributing

towards the cost of the Missionary with the result that the grant was increased yet again to £30.00.

By 1879 it was raised to the status of a regular preaching station and the Rev. G.G. MacLeod was appointed as preacher. He had been the minister in Duke Street Free Gaelic Church but had resigned in 1867 although the Highland Committee continued to employ him until 1882. A series of students supplied the Station after that but at the General Assembly in 1887 it was raised to a full ministerial charge - Partick Gaelic Free Church - but it was not until 1898 that the first minister, Rev. Alex MacRae was inducted. However in 1900 he and the congregation entered the Union and became Partick Gaelic United Free Church - now Gardner Street Church of Scotland.

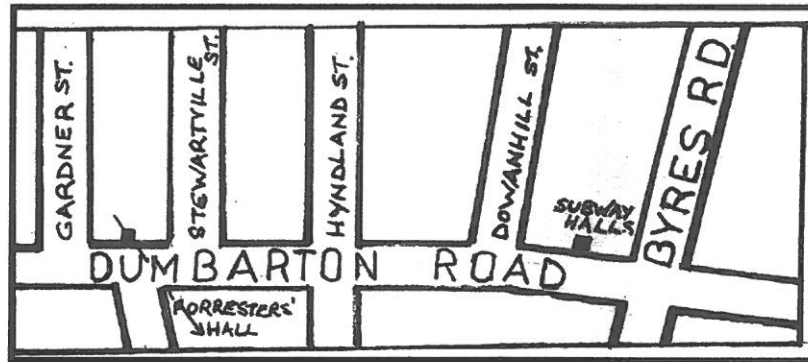
After 1900 the Free Church was left without church or congregation in Partick - no buildings having been allocated to the Free Church. The more conservative members of Partick Gaelic Free Church had left earlier and gone to the Free Presbyterian Church. It was 1905 before the Free Church made any effort to reconstitute itself in the Partick area. Services were held that year and the attendances were reported as being good but it was thought that these represented a fair number of sympathisers and the curious rather than solid support. A church was built in 1910 on Crow Road and became known as Partick (Crow Road ) Free Church.

In 1912 the first steps were taken to establish a Free Gaelic Congregation in Partick and the Highland Mission was started up initially by a group of four elders, three deacons and 21 members who broke away from the Partick Gaelic United Free Church over the introduction of an organ and their first meeting place was in the Forester Halls at 294 Dumbarton Road, between Gardner Street and Stewartville Street. Incidentally, this was the year in which the villages of Partick and Govan became part of Glasgow.

In February 1913 the Mission applied to be taken into the Free Church under the oversight of the Hope Street Free Church Kirk Session and the request was granted. They were also to be connected with Crow Road Congregation. On 6<sup>th</sup> April the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed in the Congregation when Principal M'Culloch officiated. At that time there were four elders, three deacons and twenty-one

members.

The first meeting of the Kirk Session of the new Partick Free Church Highland Mission took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1913 with Rev. Alexander Ross of Partick Crow Road Free Church as Moderator.



PARTICK 1910

By 1915 the Mission was meeting in the Subway Halls at 166 Dumbarton Road and records show that Rev. Ross requested that Gaelic preachers be sent to supply the Mission. Over the next few years they had several Missionaries –Roderick J. MacLeod, Malcolm MacIver and Murdoch MacRae – all of whom later became ministers of the Free Church in Lewis.

The Congregation continued to grow and the Quinquennial visit in 1920 revealed that there were 6 elders, three deacons and 39 communicants. Some ninety families were connected with the Congregation with four hundred attending the services on Sunday and some sixty at the Prayer Meeting. Overcrowding was becoming a problem.

At the General Assembly in 1924 a Petition was submitted from Partick Highland Mission that it be raised to the status of a sanctioned charge with leave to call a minister of their own. In supporting the petition, Rev. John MacLeod said that the Partick Highland Mission was one of the Missions of the Church that had phenomenal success during the previous few years. It was wonderful how the young people, especially of Lewis, attended the services of the Mission on the Sabbath and on week-days. The financial liberality was remarkable.

The Glasgow Presbytery unanimously agreed to recommend that the Assembly raise the status of the Mission to a sanctioned charge. The only difficulty was the location. They would carefully consider this, as it would be as well to have the Free Church Congregations in the city more widely distributed than they were. The motion was carried and the name "Partick Highland Free Church " was agreed, in the meantime, as there already was Partick Free Church " (Crow Road). Representations were made to the Presbytery in order that a collection could be started with a view to buying a church and a manse for the Congregation.

The first minister to be called to the new charge was Rev. Peter Chisholm and the induction took place on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1925. The hall, which seated around five hundred, was full to overflowing. Rev. W. Fraser, Whitingbay, preached and preside. Rev. John MacLeod, O.B.E. addressed the Congregation. At the close of the meeting Rev. Chisholm received the hearty greetings of the Congregation. Rev. Chisholm, originally in the Free Church, had taught in several places and also worked in a firm in Glasgow and it was there that the change took place which determined his future career. He joined the Free Presbyterian Church and was received as a student for the ministry. Shortly after he began preaching rumblings of dissatisfaction with the discriminating nature of his preaching began. He was



Rev. Peter Chisholm

charged with casting serious reflection on the ministry and the courts of that church so he left and was admitted back into the Free Church and accepted a call to the Island of Coll in 1921.

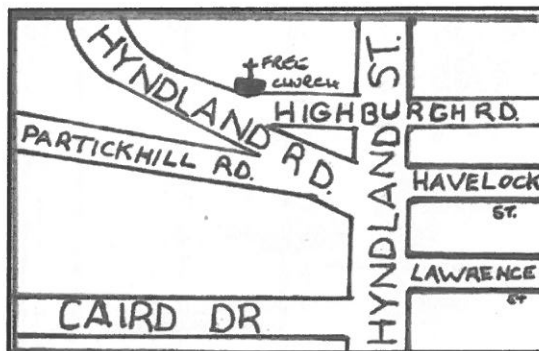
Mr. Chisholm had a remarkable personality and was known for being forceful and courageous in action and speech and for being sincere and immovable in his convictions. It was later said of him that no Gaelic preacher in the Highlands could attract and command the attention of his hearers as he could. For sheer flow of oratory there were few to compete with him. He was bold and fearless in his presentation of the Gospel. In his diary, Rev. Kenneth MacRae wrote of Mr. Chisholm being somewhat unequal in his preaching and when in good trim he was a very helpful preacher and had rich food for the Lord's people. He also said he found few so profitable – although when he

(Chisholm) went off the rails he did so with a vengeance.

By the time Rev. Chisholm was inducted a manse had been purchased at 64 Polwarth Street, Hyndland.

In December of 1924 the Commission of Assembly were asked to approve the recommendation of a site chosen at Partick and that a temporary structure should be erected at a cost of not more than £500 or £600 to seat six hundred people. The Commission was to instruct the Building Committee to give a free grant of £200 to the Partick Highland Congregation before the end of May 1925. Rev. R. MacLeod seconded the recommendation that they were sanctioning a site equidistant from Hillhead and Partick. They had to accept the fact that the Partick Highland Congregation was now a considerable body (they had over one hundred members) of real Free Church people which had developed, not by robbing other congregations but through the vigorous efforts of new-comers. They also had to bear in mind that there were groups of Highland people in Glasgow who had linguistic preferences. The recommendation was adopted.

The new church building, on Highburgh Road referred to as an "iron" church (and now used by Christian Scientists) was officially opened on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1926. Rev. Alexander Stewart, the Moderator that year, performed the opening ceremony.



Rev. Prof Donald MacLean preached from Matthew 21 v 13. Speeches were made by Prof. MacLean, Rev. J. MacLeod, O.B.E., Prof. Robert Morton and Rev. R. MacLeod, Dunoon. Rev. Peter Chisholm remarked that the responsibilities connected with the congregation appeared to be Herculean, and he hinted at the solution by reminding them

of the story of the farmer who begged Hercules to assist him to remove his cart without himself attempting to drag the wheels from the mud. He was told to put his shoulder to the wheel. The wall of Jerusalem was built by every man working opposite his own door. The claims of the new building were recommended to the liberality of the Church. Rev. Peter Chisholm remained as pastor of the congregation until 1932 when, in deteriorating health, he accepted a call to the quieter charge of Lochalsh. He died in 1957.

The Partick Highland Congregation remained vacant until 1934 when a call was sent to Rev. Murdoch Campbell who was at that time in Fort Augustus. He was inducted on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1934. The Congregation was so large that during the whole service many had to stand. The preacher for the occasion was Rev. T. Robertson, Bishopbriggs, taking as



his text Colossians 1 v 28. The new Minister was addressed by Rev. Angus MacDonald, Coatbridge, and the Congregation by Rev. John MacLeod, Hope Street. After public worship presentations were made, first to Rev. Campbell by Mr. Alex Smith in the form of a wallet of notes, and then Miss Annie Gillies and Mr. Murdo MacKenzie handed suitable gifts to Mrs. Campbell and Rev. MacLeod who had been Interim Moderator. On 9<sup>th</sup> September Rev. MacLeod preached

Rev. Murdoch Campbell and introduced Rev. Campbell to his new Congregation. He was to labour in Glasgow for over sixteen years.

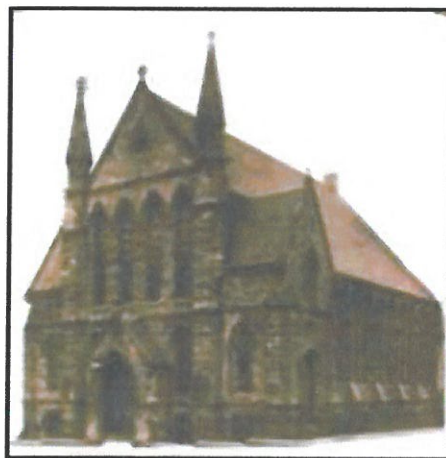
At that time the Congregation was going through a critical period in its history and Mr. Campbell flung himself into the work of building up the Congregation with zeal, energy and determination. The Congregation was scattered and needed shepherding. Life in a large city has many varied claims on the time and energies of a minister and Mr. Campbell never failed to give of his best.

During Mr. Campbell's ministry the Congregation was to move again. In 1937 they

purchased a building at the corner of Dowanhill Street and Chancellor Street built in 1880 and originally belonging to the United Free Church. It became available following the union of that congregation with Partick High Church of Scotland. The purchase price was £1250.

The building was described at the time as 'commodious and attractive'. The Congregation was made up largely of young people from the Highlands and islands, mainly from Lewis, who were residents in Glasgow and no community was in greater need of shepherding within the walls of a suitable building than such people who came as strangers to Glasgow. It was suggested in interested quarters that as the building was in The Dowanvale district the name of the Congregation might be changed to Dowanvale Free Church since the existence of two separate congregations both bearing the name

'Partick' had, in the past, led to confusion and served to make an unnecessary distinction between Free Church people in the community. Should a more attractive and historical name be desired, the name "Cameron Memorial Church" was suggested as a memorial to one minister who remained loyal to the Free Church at 1900. That change did not, of course, take place and the name "Partick Highland" remained until October 2000!



Partick Highland Free Church

The new church was officially opened on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1937 by Principal MacLeod, Edinburgh, when he preached from Psalm 132 v 15 - "I will abundantly bless her provision". A large congregation was present at the opening. Short speeches were made by the Minister of the Congregation, Rev. Campbell and also by Rev. John MacLeod, Hope Street, and Rev W. Fraser, Govan, the latter two congratulating the Congregation on securing such a building and the prospect of having all debts paid off before the end of the year. Others present for the occasion included Rev. A. Tolmie, Rev. D. MacDougall, Rev. H. Whittington and Rev. Andrew Sutherland.



In the Monthly Record of September 1937 Rev. Campbell made an appeal to the Church at large for financial help in order that the debt be paid off by the end of 1938. As already noted, due to the generosity of the people the debt was paid off by the end of 1937.

On 6<sup>th</sup> October 1949 the Congregation held a special meeting to mark 15 years since Mr. Campbell became their Minister. Rev. Campbell himself preached, taking Philippians 4 v 11 as his text. After worship the chair was taken by Mr. Alex Smith, Elder. He spoke of the work done by Mr. Campbell since he came to Glasgow. Not only was he instrumental in providing the Congregation with a beautiful church but under his hand the Congregation had grown and was consolidated. Mr. Malcolm MacKenzie then asked Mr. Campbell to accept a gift which in some measure might show how attached they were to him and their appreciation of his ministry. Mrs. D. Beaton then presented Mrs. Campbell with a gift as an expression of their love towards her. Mrs. Campbell replied by saying that she had never experienced anything but kindness from them all. In his reply, Mr. Campbell said that after so long a time in a big city one felt the strain. He also said that he knew in his heart that the people he loved most in this world and with whom he hoped to spend eternity were in Glasgow. The happy occasion was brought to a close with the singing of Psalm 133 and the Benediction.

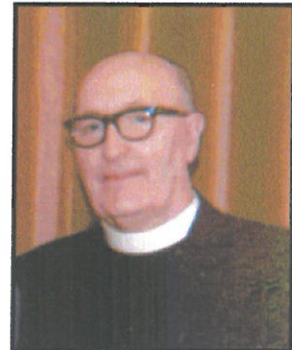
Rev. Murdo Campbell was not to remain in Glasgow for too long after that occasion as in 1951 he accepted a call to Resolis in Ross-shire and on 21<sup>st</sup> June a large congregation gathered to bid him and Mrs. Campbell farewell. Rev. A. MacDougall presided and after worship he expressed the Congregation's regret at having to take leave of one whose ministry in Glasgow had been appreciated so much. He was going to a less strenuous charge, but to a Highland Parish more famous than any in the land. Mr. MacKenzie, Elder, was then called on to present Mr. Campbell with a cheque and Mrs. Beaton presented Mrs. Campbell with a cheque and two pieces of furniture for the new manse. Presentations of inscribed Bibles were then made to the Campbell children, Anne, Mary and David. In his reply Mr. Campbell said he would not comment on his work in Glasgow. For any token of good the Lord alone had to be magnified.

The occasion was brought to a close with the singing of the last verses of Psalm 122.

Rev. Campbell was particularly well known for his writings. He died in 1974 at the age of 73.

The Partick Highland Congregation found themselves without a pastor once again. In 1952 a call was addressed to Rev. Kenneth McLeay, Kilmoronack, but he declined it. However, in 1954 the vacancy was filled when Rev. Malcolm Morrison was inducted to the charge. It was indeed a happy evening for the Congregation. The church was packed and late comers had difficulty in even finding a corner in the galleries. Also present were fourteen ministers of the Presbytery and Rev. Murdoch Campbell, the former minister of the Congregation.

The Rev. Angus Grant, Dunoon, who was Moderator, preached and presided taking his text from 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4 v 5. After Mr. Morrison was inducted to the charge of Partick Highland Free Church he was addressed by Rev. Peter Jackson, Milton, and the Congregation by Rev. A. MacLeod, Partick, Interim Moderator. The service was closed with the Benediction. Rev. MacLeod then took the chair and read several telegrams of good wishes especially from Mr. Morrison's previous congregation in Scalpay, Harris. The usual presentations were made to Rev. & Mrs. Morrison and also the two younger members of the Morrison family of four boys. Mr. Morrison suitably replied then took the chair and called on Mr. Donald Beaton to make a presentation to the Interim Moderator. The following Sabbath the new Minister was introduced to the Congregation by Rev. Murdoch Campbell.



Rev. Malcolm Morrison

Rev Morrison exercised a fruitful ministry in the Partick Highland Congregation. The Congregation continued to grow and was becoming even more widespread. Many miles he walked and many thousand steps he climbed in the city tenements as he visited the people. He had a particular concern for the young.



### **PARTICK HIGHLAND SABBATH SCHOOL 1965**

He continued as pastor of the Congregation until he retired in 1970. On Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January of that year he was the guest of the Glasgow Presbytery in the Y.M.C.A. Restaurant. After tea several speeches were made, the first by Rev. A. Boyd who also had the honour of handing a cheque to Mr. Morrison showing the affection of the brethren towards him. Mr. Morrison had seldom found it difficult to speak but he did so on this occasion when emotions and past memories came in. But he soon overcame that and in the same inimitable manner as was his custom he began to speak "bringing forth out of his treasure things old and new."

Rev. Donald Gibson spoke about Lewis men in general and said that Mr. Morrison was the very best - "For Export Only". Rev. John Morrison also called to mind the first time he had seen and heard Mr. Morrison - not preaching but presenting. He had never forgotten the Psalm or the tune.

Rev. H. Whittington, in a letter, reminded Mr. Morrison that although he was retiring "there is no discharge in this war." Mr. Morrison continued to serve the Lord for many years after his official retiral.

The vacancy this time was of short duration and on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1970 the Glasgow Presbytery met in Partick Highland Free Church for the induction of Rev. Donald MacLeod, formerly of Kilmallie. For the occasion Rev. Hugh Ferrier presided and preached from Acts 26 v 16 - 19. Rev. Peter Jackson, Milton, addressed the newly inducted Minister and Rev. Murdo Alex MacLeod, Drumchapel, the Congregation.

The usual presentations were made, to Mr. MacLeod by Mr. Alex Smith, Mrs. MacLeod by Mrs. Malcolm Morrison and to Mrs. MacLeod for the children by Mrs. Buchan. Rev. MacLeod expressed his thanks for the gifts to himself and his family. Rev. M. A. MacLeod, Interim Moderator, was also remembered and received a gift from the Congregation.

All present then enjoyed tea in the hall prepared by the ladies of the Congregation.



Rev. Donald MacLeod

During Rev. MacLeod's time in Partick Highland changes were taking place in many churches and Partick Highland was no exception. Up until this time Gaelic was the main language for preaching. Gaelic services were held at 2.30pm (for the convenience of the many women who were employed as domestic servants in years gone by ) and also at 6.30pm. An English service was held at 11.00am. However, by 1972 Rev. MacLeod felt that it would be more profitable to have the main service in English. Attendances at Gaelic Services were dropping and so the afternoon Gaelic Service was stopped and the Evening Service became an English Service followed by Gaelic at 7.45pm. This practice continued until 1983 when the Gaelic Service was discontinued. Another change that took place concerned the Mid-week Prayer Meeting in that it was not until 1975 that a Meeting in English was started and eventually the Gaelic was dropped altogether. Another evidence that Gaelic was the main language was at the twice yearly Communion when the Gaelic Service on Sunday was in the Church with an English one in the Hall, but as numbers began to fall the Gaelic Service was discontinued and the main Service was in English in the Church. The day came when the only Gaelic Service of the Communion Season was on the Monday morning.

The Rev. Donald MacLeod continued as Minister of the Congregation until 1978 when he was appointed Professor of Systematic Theology in the Free Church College in Edinburgh. He had been appointed Editor of the Monthly record in 1977.

Up to this point in time all the ministers of Partick Highland Free Church had been Lewis

men but that was about to change with the induction of Rev. John Angus Gillies, a Skye man from the parish of Kilmuir who can lay claim to the fact that his grandfather, Archibald Gillies, was an elder with the noted Roderick MacLeod – “Maighstear Ruairidh” of Snizort. Mr. Gillies had formerly been minister in Poolewe and Altbea.

The induction took place on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1981 when Rev. Douglas MacMillan presided and preached from Acts 11 v 13 – 15. Rev. Alasdair Johnston, Dumbarton addressed the new Minister and Rev. William MacLeod, Interim Moderator, the congregation.



Rev. J. A. Gillies

After the service the usual presentations were made to the new minister and his family and then all present were invited to tea in the Church Hall. Speeches of welcome were made and telegrams of good wishes read, including one from Professor MacLeod. The evening was brought to a close with the singing of Psalm 72 v 17 - 19.

December 1984 brought a special event in the life of the Partick Highland Congregation as on the 10<sup>th</sup> of that month a special social evening was held to mark the 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday of their Senior Minister, Rev Malcolm Morrison. Rev. John Gillies presided saying what great pleasure it gave him to host the occasion. Mr. Norman Morrison, Elder recalled the blessings received from Mr. Morrison’s ministry. He presented Mr. Morrison with book tokens wishing him many happy days of reading. He was also given a walking stick from the Sabbath School. Mrs. Morrison was also remembered and received a chair and a bouquet of flowers. On taking the floor to reply, Rev. Morrison commented that he would rather be in the pulpit! He recalled feelings when leaving Scalpay to come to Glasgow but said he had known that he had to come to Partick Highland. He thanked all present for coming, saying that he never expected anything like that event when the people would show their ‘love’ for his wife and for himself. He closed by quoting a mothers advice to a young preacher : “Don’t satisfy the righteous and don’t weary the unconverted” and although he said ‘that opened another door for him’ he finished there. Mr. Gillies thanked all who had made the evening such a success and it

was closed with the singing of Psalm 67 and the reading of 1 Corinthians 13. Rev. Murdo Martin, Paisley, led in prayer.

In his Comment in the Monthly Record regarding the event, Prof. MacLeod remarked on the debt he owed to Mr. Morrison's preaching when he came to Glasgow as a student. No less important, he said, was the fact that the Morrison family created a model Christian home where disorientated exiles and students were always welcome.

Great sadness was felt by the Congregation when, at the beginning of April 1987 they learned of the death of Mr. Morrison. He was in his 93<sup>rd</sup> year and had a long, full and fruitful life. He was well known and greatly loved throughout the Church. He had served the Free Church in Kinlochewe, Coigach and Scalpay before coming to Glasgow. He was a most diligent pastor and always had a special place in his affections for the young, encouraging them in the ways of truth. Professor MacLeod, in his own tribute in the Monthly Record again recalled his personal debt to Mr. Morrison. "In our spiritual infancy, he gave help and guidance, and for ten years he gave unobtrusive support and encouragement while we served as his junior Colleague. A relationship which many think impossible, worked because he made it work, neither abdicating nor intruding.

The secret of that and of all else in his life was simple. "For me to live is Christ." "

And so another chapter in the life of Partick Highland came to a close.

In November 1987 it was announced by the Free Church that the Moderator of the General Assembly in May of the following year was to be Rev. John Angus Gillies, minister of Partick Highland Free Church. During the Assembly and his Moderatorial Year, he carried out his duties admirably.

Congregational life carried on but over the following years attendances started to go down and the unrest within the Free Church at large, which culminated in 2000, began to make itself felt. When the Secession took place in January 2000 Rev. John Gillies sided with those who went out from the Free Church of Scotland and so the Congregation of Partick Highland was left without a pastor. Many of the Congregation also left with him. It was a time of sadness, but those who remained proved themselves loyal to the Cause and carried on. Rev. Alasdair MacDonald, Dunblane, was appointed Interim Moderator.

The Glasgow Presbytery was particularly badly affected by the split and as time went on it was becoming obvious that all the congregations were not going to be able to exist on their own. Discussions were entered into to consider linking congregations.

The Drumchapel Congregation had dwindled before the split and was affected further by it and it seemed they could not continue as a separate charge. They were already without a minister.

The Briton Street Congregation, without a minister before the split, Rev. Donald MacLeod having retired, were also quite badly affected and it appeared that they too would have difficulty in remaining as a separate charge

Partick Highland found themselves in the same situation and the discussions began as to the possibility of linking the three congregations - Briton Street, Drumchapel and Partick Highland. And that is what took place in October 2000 by agreement of the Commission of Assembly. They would be one Congregation, with one Kirk Session and would worship in the building in Dowanhill Street. A new name was given to the new Congregation - Dowanvale Free Church of Scotland with Rev. Alasdair MacDonald as Interim Moderator.

And so another of the well-known names in Free Church circles disappeared into the history books.

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*Part 6*

*Dowanvale Free Church*





## **DOWANVALE FREE CHURCH**

The Dowanvale Free Church of Scotland Congregation came into being following the Secession in January 2000. Glasgow was badly affected and the three congregations of Briton Street, Drumchapel and Partick Highland found themselves in the situation of having no minister and with reduced numbers and the distinct possibility of none of them being able to continue as a separate charge. Discussions took place between the three Kirk Sessions and the Presbytery and after several trial weeks of worshipping together it was decided that they should unite. And so it was agreed at Commission of Assembly in October 2000 that the three congregations would become one, with one Kirk Session and

one Deacons' Court and would worship in the former Partick Highland church building in Dowanhill Street. The Congregation was given a new name – Dowanvale Free Church of Scotland. (The area in which the church is situated was formerly known as Dowanvale and the mat at the front door, which has the name of the pre- Partick Highland Church written on it – 'Dowanvale' – is still there 66 years on!)



**DOWANVALE FREE CHURCH**

The Congregation was now in a position to Call a minister and after some months of supply a Call was addressed, in the spring of 2001, to Rev. Kenneth Stewart, Stornoway. the Call was accepted and so it was with thankful hearts that the Glasgow Presbytery met with the Congregation in the Church on the evening of 22 June 2001 for the induction of Rev. Kenneth Stewart to the new charge of Dowanvale Free Church of Scotland. There was a large congregation for the occasion including friends, from Stornoway and North Uist.



**Rev. Kenneth Stewart**



**FREE PRESBYTERY  
OF  
GLASGOW & ARGYLL  
INDUCTION OF  
REV KENNETH STEWART  
TO THE CONGREGATION  
OF  
DOUGALVALE FREE CHURCH  
FRIDAY 22ND JUNE 2001**

Rev. David Wilkie, Ayr, preached and presided taking his text from 1 Thessalonians 1 v 5. Rev. Wilkie addressed the new minister and Rev. Alasdair MacDonald, Dunblane, Interim Moderator addressed the Congregation and in so doing spoke of the unity of the new Congregation and of the 'costs' involved in bring the three congregations together and urged on them a passion for God's House underlining the importance of prayer. The devotional part of the evening was brought to a close with the singing of Psalm 122 and the Benediction.

Presentations were then made to Rev. Stewart by Mr. John Murray, Elder, to Mrs. Stewart by Mrs. Wright and to the four Stewart children by four children from the Sunday School. Rev. Alasdair MacDonald was not forgotten and received a gift at the hands of Mr. John MacKenzie, in appreciation for all he had done for the Congregation. Rev. Stewart suitably replied on behalf of himself and his family thanking the Congregation for their kindness, as did Rev. MacDonald. The singing of Psalm 133 brought that part of the evening to a close and all present were then invited to join the Congregation at Jordanhill College for the reception.

After all had partaken of the very fine supper provided, many expressions of good wishes were read out including some from the Toronto Congregation where Rev. Stewart had previously ministered. The three speakers for the evening were Principal Donald MacLeod, Rev. Kenneth I. MacLeod and Mr. Joe MacPhee, chosen for their varied associations with Rev. Kenneth Stewart and to these speakers he suitably responded.

And so a very happy evening came to an end and a new chapter in the history, not only of the Congregation but also of the Free Church of Scotland had begun.

On the following Sunday Rev. Stewart was introduced to the Congregation by his friend and former colleague Rev. Kenneth I. MacLeod, Stornoway, and he conducted the Evening Service himself.

Since then the Congregation has grown in every way not least in the numbers who attend the Sunday Services and the Mid-week Prayer Meeting. The Youth Fellowship has restarted, the work with the children in Briton Street is on going, work along side the Open Doors Trust has started in the Drumchapel Church building and a monthly After-church Fellowship has started. The ladies of the Congregation meet monthly in an informal way to help support the Mission work of the Church at large. A Gaelic Service is now held once a month in Partick Burgh Hall that is attended not only by people from the Dowanvale Congregation but from other congregations in and around Glasgow. The building itself is being renovated to make it more suitable for the needs of the Congregation and we trust for those around the church in days to come.

And so the Congregation looks forward with thanksgiving to God for His leading them to this point and trusting Him as He leads them in the future.

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