

1953 May The Important Thing concerning the re-opening and dedication of the  
Church

Manse Notes

"The most important thing about the Re-opening and Dedication of our Church is not the tea or the speeches by important guests, the important word is the word "Dedication" first of the Church, but even more important, of ourselves.

Our new Church (and it is likely to be very beautiful) will not automatically produce new men and women. We need to renew our dedication to Jesus Christ and the things of His Church and Kingdom. If we fail in this the dedication of the building will be a poor thing.

One word about the Hall. We have had and we hope will have great moments in the Hall. To some of us it has all the essentials of a church building. Some of us will leave it with just a little regret. The place where one is born of the flesh always hold something of the character of home about it, even when it ceases to be a human habitation.

Even more the place where one is born of the spirit is held dear and such we venture to hope St. Andrew's Hall is. As one who has preached from the desk in the Hall for seven years, sometimes to congregations far beyond the normal or reasonable capacity of the building and sometimes to a mere handful of people. I have to confess that it would not worry me at all if because of some human or divine intervention we should be hindered from entering the new church. The Church is wherever Christ meets with two or three who assemble in His name. The essential thing is our dedication of ourselves.

The Hall has been a sacred place to most of us, the place of our confessions our vows and prayers. We thank God for it."

C. McCurdy

23rd, JUNE 1953

In the first lesson read at the Children's Service on the first Sunday in July there occurred in the 9th verse of the first chapter of Joshua words which might well have been the call to us on that bleak Sunday in December 1940 when the burnt skeleton of the church building stood black and wet under the grey sky - "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee."

Now more than twelve years later on a glorious June afternoon we opened the re-built church and we look back over those years realising how we have been sustained during the seeming endless wait, how we have been inspired to give of our substance, to search for a beautiful design, and how we were held together as a congregation in the difficult days by Sydney O. Morgan, and led to a triumphant conclusion by Charles McCurdy.

We are too close to the event now to see clearly, but we shall realise with the passage of time all that we owe to our present minister in the work which has been accomplished. He presided over the meetings which drew up and approved the plans; he controlled the turbulence of those days by his humour and good sense. Once the building was started he watched over it day by day and it was his inspiration and determination that grasped the opportunity of the Opening to place St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in the forefront of the City and to stage the occasion. In whatever way people as individuals, office-bearers collectively and the congregation have played their part we have been conscious throughout of our Minister leading the way and keeping us in good heart.

For those who could not be with us on the great day words may give some picture of the scene. The most vivid impression was of light and space, the light oak of the pulpit, choir stalls, communion table and chairs, the soaring walls of the chancel with a rose window set high under the roof which is powder blue in colour with golden stars and crossed by brown beams decorated with the cross of St. Andrew. Overall the scent of freshly worked wood, more stimulating than incense. The floor of polished wood blocks bearing rows of light oak chairs which by their low backs compared with pews have altered the appearance of the building and given a great air of spaciousness. The chancel floor was covered with a deep blue carpet and from the pulpit and lectern hung frontals bearing the symbols of the Presbyterian Church.

Over the footfalls of the gathering congregation, and the greetings of long parted friends, the mellow tones of a grand piano rose and fell.

Then came the processions, the Presbytery of Yorkshire to occupy the choir stalls; the visiting clergy to seats at the front; the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, the Master Cutler and the Vice-Chancellor of the University in the centre of the front row, each procession moving slowly through the length of the church, and at last the outer doors were closed. The service for which we had waited so long commenced.

#### ORDER OF SERVICE

The congregation being assembled and the members of the Presbytery and other associated Ministers and Clergy being in their appointed places, the inner doors of the Church will be closed.

The Moderator and other officiating Ministers shall proceed from the Session Room to the main door of the Church. Knocking on the door, the Moderator shall commence the service with appropriate words of Holy Scripture. (The doors shall be opened by the Clerk of Session, Mr. Robert Cuming, and the congregation shall stand and remain standing till the end of the Moderator's prayer.)

According to ancient usage and practice of the Church the keys shall be presented to the Moderator who shall accept them in the name of the Presbyterian Church of

England.

Passing through the inner doors of the Church, the Moderator shall proceed to the Dedication with an appropriate Blessing and Prayer. Thereafter he shall announce the opening praise -

METRICAL PSALM 24 7-10

HYMN 737

During the singing of this Psalm the Moderator and the other officiating Minister shall proceed to their appointed places. This Psalm being ended, the Senior Elder, Mr. P. T. Jarvis, shall carry the Pulpit Bible from the Session Room and present it to the presiding Minister, who shall receive it and place it on the Pulpit Desk and call the congregation to worship.

INVOCATION PRAYER

METRICAL PSALM 100 HYMN 766

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE ( 1 Kings ch. 8, 22 and 23, 27-30) Read by the Moderator of the Presbytery, the Revd. A. A. Baillie, M. A.

PRAYER The Revd. James Wallace, M.A.

HYMN 21

SCRIPTURES of the New TESTAMENT

(Ephesians ch. 2, 13-22)

(St. Matt. ch. 21, 12-16) Read by the Revd. A. D. Marcus, O.B.E., M. A. D.D., National General Secretary of the Free Church Federal Council

THE APOSTLES CREED

HYMN 206

THE DEDICATION

THE DEDICATION PRAYER and the LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN 534

SERMON

The Moderator of Assembly

THE OFFERING Dedicated by the Minister of the Congregation

HYMN 562

BENEDICTION

The Moderator fulfilled the hopes and expectations when he preached a scholarly sermon on Dedication and we feel that we were privileged to be present to hear him on such an occasion.

When the service ended the processions reformed and returned to the Hall . The congregation made its way to the University and into Firth Hall where tea was set out. With a High table on the platform presided over by the Revd. C. McCurdy, the floor of the Hall was occupied by about 400 members and friends. This great Hall of the University with the high beamed roof, the oak panelled walls and the portraits of men who have been prominent in the life of the University formed a delightful setting for the occasion.

Tea being over, the Session Clerk read telegrams sent to us from friends and Members:

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"On this glad occasion please accept the felicitations of two former members of St. Andrew's who grew up in its midst and who cherish happy memories of the years they spent in its service. May it long continue to flourish and ever remain a power for good."

Helen and Howell Evans, Montreal

"Proud and happy that out of the ashes has arisen a new St. Andrew's Within her walls may peace abound may all her heart's in one agree. Where brethren meet where Christ is found may peace and concord ever be. "

Bessie C. Henry Wigtown

"Warmest congratulations on completion of great work. Peace and prosperity be within thy walls. Our best wishes and prayers are with you."

Mr. and Mrs. w. Laurie, Dornoch

"Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former. Best wishes . "

Mr. and Mrs. J. Marchinton Portree

"Convey very best wishes for future success."

The Ogilvie family, St. Albans

"Best wishes. Our thoughts are with you and all the good folks of St. Andrew's on this your great day."

Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Stanope,  
Hainault

"Best wishes for the great day."

Jean Thomson , High Wycombe

In most happily phrased speeches by the Lord Mayor, the Vice-Chancellor of the University and the Moderator, Dr. J. G. McCrie spoke of the spiritual leadership of Mr. McCurdy, of the man whom we can meet on an ordinary basis of fellowship and friendliness and of the role played by him in the administrative affairs of the church. This

was followed by Dr. Marion Taylor presenting Mr. McCurdy with new robes; a gift from the members of St. Andrew's who are of the Medical profession.

As the gathering dispersed thoughts turned to those who after years of service in the congregation were prevented from being present by age and infirmity or by illness, and not least to the five elders who are still members of the Session :- Messrs. Caton, Hyde, McCaskell, McGregor and Peat. Also to that valiant body of members who have been and are the Reconstruction Committee past and present. They have laboured through the years, produced plans, devised schemes, faced criticism, reconciled the conflicting opinions of four hundred members, borne patiently with all who had something to say, and not least with the Editor, to each individually and to the successive Conveners of the Committee, the congregation owes a debt which can never be repaid, and greatest of all to Mr. Haxton who, amid all his personal anxieties has finished the work, uniting architect and contractor to produce the finished building. We express our thanks to all who have laboured on our behalf, not forgetting those who have attended to the financial side and organised the appeal which has allowed us to develop as well as to rebuild.

The Revd. George Macleod once wrote a book on the work of the Iona Community entitled "we shall rebuild." We in St. Andrew's may say with thankfulness -

“WE HAVE REBUILT.”

Taken from "The Sheffield Telegraph"

24 June 1953

### BLITZ, CHURCH RISES AGAIN. VOW MADE IN RUINS FULFILLED

Three of the dozen members of the congregation who met after the Sheffield blitz in the smoking ruins of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Hanover Street, Sheffield, to decide the church's immediate future were present at yesterday's reopening and dedication of the beautifully rebuilt church. Of the others, some have died and some have left Sheffield. The trio present yesterday were Mr. Robert Cumming (Session Clerk), Dr. D. C. Barron and Mr. J. F. Colquhoun, formerly Sheffield Lighting Engineer now in retirement at Largs, who came to Sheffield specially to attend the reopening. At their meeting in the blitzed church on the morning of 14th December 1940, the first decision of the dozen was to carry on the church in the church hall.

The congregation was advised to wear overcoats as there was no heating in the hall.

In yesterday's congregation were ministerial and lay visitors from all over Yorkshire Presbytery, who joined with representatives of Anglican and Free Churches in Sheffield and the members of St. Andrew's congregation in admiration of the handsome new inner structure. The dedication was conducted by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England, the Rt. Revd: Professor T. W. Manson of Newcastle in the presence of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Sheffield (Coun. and Mrs. Oliver S. Holmes), the Master Cutler, (Sir Harold West), the Provost of Sheffield (the Very Revd: J. H. Cruse), who also represented the Bishop of Sheffield (Dr. L. S. Hunter) and Dr. J. M. Whittaker, (Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield University.) After tea in the Firth Hall of the University, the Lord Mayor said that at St. Andrew's something beautiful had risen out of the devastation of 12th December 1940, and the members of the church had set a fine example to the other citizens of Sheffield in what they had accomplished. The Revd: Charles McCurdy, minister of the church, presided, and other speakers included Dr. Manson; the Revd: Walter Edwards, who, as Mr. McCurdy's predecessor as president of Sheffield Free Church Federal Council, brought the council's good wishes; Dr. A. D. Harcus, National General Secretary of the Free Church Federal Council; and on behalf of the Anglican Church, the Revd. J. Atkinson of the University and the Cathedral. To Mr. McCurdy the doctors of St. Andrew's congregation presented a new gown. There has been little alteration to the outside of the church, but the inside has been re-designed without altering outside walls or arcade. The floor is covered with oak blocks and the chancel has a blue carpet. All furnishings are new, and the chancel furniture is of oak, the elders' chairs being upholstered in crimson leather with symbols embossed and gilded on the back. The main contractor was C. H. Gillam and Sons Ltd., of Harland Road, Sheffield, and the architect was Teather and Hadfield, of Campo Lane, Sheffield. The heating is fully up-

to-date, all the floor being gently warmed by means of embedded heating coils in the concrete below the wood block finish . Exceptionally comfortable conditions are obtained without any exposed pipes or radiators. Warm water is circulated through the coils from a basement boiler fired by means of a mechanical coal stoker which picks up fuel automatically from the main bunker and feeds into the boiler without handling. Thermostatic control ensures steady, even temperature. The heating installation, described as panel invisible warming was installed by Rosser and Russell Ltd. of Leeds, under the direction of the architect. The rebuilding cost about £30,000. In addition to the amount received from the War Damage Commission, the congregation has raised over £10,000. By next winter the church will have the completely rebuilt organ from the blitzed Attercliffe Parish Church, now demolished.