

# Rainy Dayze



DECEMBER 2009

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As ever, your input/ ideas gratefully received!	

## On Being: A light shines.

**"In him was life, and that life was the light of all people.  
The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness did not overcome it." John 1:4-5**

Advent makes me glad to live in the Northern hemisphere. At this time of year the days get shorter and the nights get colder and the trees and grass look deader every day. It might not be much fun, but it always feels to me as if the world around us were working hard to illustrate the story that we are in the process of celebrating. We wait in the dark, hungry and hoping for the light to come. We light candles and fairy lights to remind ourselves that the darkness does not have the last word.

Yet our lights look so small in the face of the darkness that surrounds them. Our world seems dark indeed when we hear news of war and famine, poverty and ecological destruction. It seems dark when we experience troubles of our own, or share other people's. And into all this darkness, the light of Christ is born. Such a little light at first, to enlighten all people. Such a preposterous solution to the world's problems. Yet the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not, will not, overcome it.

*Lord, enlighten our hearts that we may see and celebrate your coming this Advent and Christmas. Fill us with your light, that you may shine on others through us. Amen.*

*Amy Pierce*



## Getting to know you... Alison Jack



The Principal of New College is appointed by the General Assembly from the senior academic staff of the School and, with the College Senate, is responsible to the Church for the oversight of the academic element of the training of its candidates. The way the role of the Principal was explained to me was that

where necessary, he or she seeks to interpret the Church to the University and the University to the Church. For the past year I've had the happy task of working with Professor David Fergusson as he carries out this role.

I came to New College as an undergraduate in 1989, and have found it hard to leave the place since then. After my BD and PhD in New Testament Studies I was a probationer at St Philip's Joppa with John Weir Cook, and I stayed on afterwards for 3 years as the associate minister there. We moved to Dunblane and I worked as Locum at Holy Trinity Church in Bridge of Allan before being drawn back to New College as Editor of *The Expository Times*. I was fortunate to be offered the two-year post of Hope Trust Research Fellow here. And now

I'm Assistant Principal and job-sharing the editorship of *The Expository Times* again. In semester 1, I've enjoyed teaching a new Honours course on the Parables of Jesus, and I'm looking forward to reworking my Reading the Bible and Literature course in semester 2. I'm also trying to write a book for SCM's Core Textbook series on the Bible and literature.

There are lots of really good things about being Assistant Principal. One is getting to know Church Candidates and supporting and encouraging them where I can. Another is the opportunity to travel with them on summer study trips, in 2008 to Jerusalem and this year to Rome. Both trips were characterized by a determination to cover as much as possible in very hot weather, and lots of good company and fun. Geneva here we come next year!

*Alison Jack*



## And death shall have no dominion...

*Each year the Candidates' Committee organise a visit to a funeral director and trip to a crematorium.*

*Ruth Halley reflects on the trip this semester...*

We were met by Andrew who introduced himself as responsible for community liaison. Andrew's presentation covered a range of topics including the practicalities of funeral arrangement, the legal framework, post-mortem and embalming processes. We learned about the new process of resumption being trialled south of the border (details on request!). We learned that of around 25 funerals each week, 3 were for members of the Church of Scotland, 2 were Roman Catholic, 2 requested a humanist service, and the rest were 'parish funerals'. We learned about corkscrew and skateboard coffins, horse drawn and motorbike

hearses. More importantly, we learned what Andrew felt was most important to grieving families – the little things that make a funeral personal.

Our visit took on a more experiential quality as we entered the viewing rooms where the deceased were laid out in readiness for visitors. Later we travelled to Warriston Crematorium and went 'behind the scenes' to learn about what happens after the committal. I came away with a renewed sense of peace in relation to my call into ministry with the bereaved, and in terms of my own personal losses. The whole experience was very grounding and, as is so often the case, also deeply spiritual.

*Ruth Halley*

RAINY

DAYZE:

Just a product of your wild & fertile imagination...

# The West Highland Way fundraiser



As many of you are probably aware, the New College Mission Society has been operating in spreading the gospel abroad for over a century, from Asia to Africa to South America. The NCMS's latest project took place this summer, in Chennai (Madras) in India, in conjunction with the Church of South India. Six missionaries, all first year Edinburgh Uni students went to work in "Puthuir" – a special needs school. "Puthuir" means "New Life" in Tamil, and the education and life skills provided to these needy young people is essential to their future prospects, livelihood and even their lives.

The missionaries taught, coached and played with young people from age 2 – 18 for six weeks. Chennai is a densely populated, heavily industrialised and relatively impoverished region of India, and adequate care for children is sparse, let alone care for children with special needs. The NCMS is hoping to establish good links with both the Church of South India (which is partnered with the Edinburgh CofS Presbytery) and Puthuir, in order to evangelise to a largely non-Christian region and care for the marginalised of society.

**Three Men.**

**One Tent.**

**153 kilometres...**

**"This will be fun"**

**– Ben Williams**

So, in response to all this, NCMS thought that fundraising may be appropriate, and so from the 14<sup>th</sup> of May, Joel Robertson, Ben Williams and Don Pritchard, three Divinity undergraduates, trekked from Glasgow to Fort William via the infamous West Highland Way. The guys were sponsored to walk 153km, a huge undertaking, yet we succeeded in the walk and in raising almost 20% of the cost of the trip. Idyllic views, beautiful weather, and sleeping bags which were as dense as concrete made for a challenging yet rewarding journey, and although injury and blisters struck, we were spared the midgies... Our thanks go to the many people who sponsored us, your help gave us the incentive to keep walking and has clearly aided the mission trip. Thanks again,

*Ben, Joel & Don.*



If you would like to know more about NCMS and possibly get involved in some way, have a chat to  
Iain May



# Blythswood Shoeboxes: an update

A brief update on the recent Blythswood Shoebox Appeal at New College...

New College Candidates and Praxis joined forces this year to support the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal... and were delighted that the whole School of Divinity got behind the project.

A team of elves cheerfully assembled and wrapped shoeboxes over the course of the first week of November.

The overall tally was:

37 Assembled and wrapped shoeboxes

£262 Cash donations

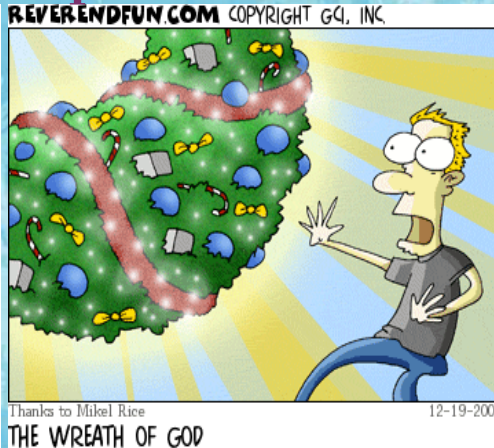
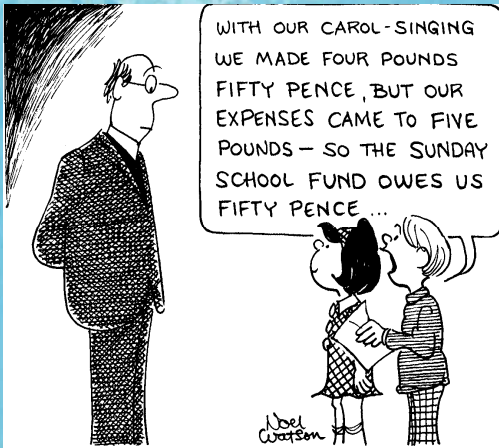
And as we ran out of shoeboxes... bags of 'stuff' that would have filled at least another 10 shoeboxes.

Thanks everyone for all your support and for putting a smile on someone's face this Christmas

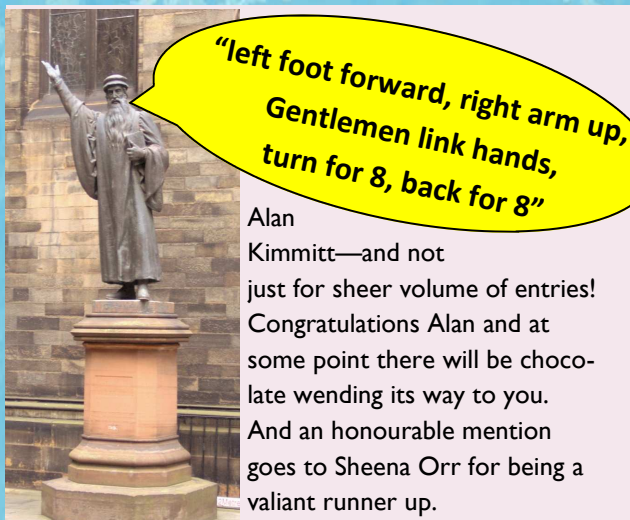
Nikki Macdonald



## Candidate 'lite': in pictures...



### Caption competition: and the winner is...



Alan Kimmitt—and not just for sheer volume of entries! Congratulations Alan and at some point there will be chocolate wending its way to you. And an honourable mention goes to Sheena Orr for being a valiant runner up.

**John Knox:**  
**The man;**  
**The legend;**  
**The beard.**

## 12 Days of Christmas competition:

Given the RSPCA would be having a field day with the 'traditional' 12 gifts given over the 12 days of Christmas... what would a more politically correct version of gifts be?

List your 12 and send them to Nikki via email: N.M.Macdonald-2@sms.ed.ac.uk by mid-Jan for inclusion in the Feb. edition of Rainy Dayze....

Don't be shy now and let your creativity run riot.

[Open to **any** recipient of this august publication]

## Newsletter Notes

Newsletter: comes out twice per semester unless the dark forces conspire and conquer. This is a call for volunteers: If you'd like to write a short article or poem for inclusion; fancy doing the wee prayer/ reflection slot for 'On Being'; have ideas for competitions/ or a wee silly something for 'Candidate Lite'; or would like to get involved with helping

to put together the newsletter... here's your chance! Talk to Nikki. Next edition's theme is 'Giving up, taking on: Repent, it's Lent!'

### RAINY

### DAYZE:

Just a product of your wild & fertile imagination...

Copy due end January.  
 Articles no longer than 150-200 words.  
 Email the editor:  
 N.M.Macdonald-2@sms.ed.ac.uk