



SESSION CLERK'S REPORT 2014/15

George Burns once said

“ A good report requires snappy beginning and snappy end with as little as possible in between. ”

This then is not going to be a good report!

This year I want to deliver a different kind of report from usual. The Annual Accounts detail the achievements & performance of the church during the year. I don't want to repeat what I've already written and what you've already read. (You have all read it haven't you ?)

This year I want to talk about what is behind all these achievements - **people - you, the congregation.**

*“The Church is not a building
The Church is not a steeple
The Church is not a resting place
The Church is its people”*

I don't want to name everyone involved in any aspect of the church. Firstly, I could not and secondly, it would be too dangerous and could cause offence if I missed anyone out. However I will name a few individuals.

The Minister Sandor's is not just a Sunday job. The preparation of sermons (relatively few churches have a morning and an evening service) ; Chairing (or Moderating) meetings ; hospital (Skye and Inverness) and home visiting ; Church of Scotland committee work in Edinburgh ; Presbytery meetings (his favourite) ; acting as Interim Moderator in Kilmuir & Stenscholl having also covered in Dunvegan when he was the only minister in the whole of Skye ; acting as supervisor for our Probationer, John Murray ; weddings ; funerals ...

The Minister's wife, Susan For providing hospitality for visitors and people attending meetings in the Manse, but more importantly giving Sandor every support in his work in Portree. All this in addition to being a member of our congregation who gets involved in many activities.

The Kirk Session and Congregational Board for meeting regularly to take decisions regarding the direction the church will take.

Norman Bruce, David Morton & Ann MacLeod looking after the fabric of our buildings – inside and out. With the gentlemen also in attendance at the door for funerals.

David Sime & John Cameron for their playing at services, remembering the unseen hours of practice they put in and the time they take in picking appropriate hymns to match Sandor's chosen Bible readings.

Our Church Officers Murdo MacDonald, David Morton in the mornings and Lachie Gillies, Roddy Beaton and Alan MacKenzie in the evening.

Our Collection Counting Team Roddy Beaton, Katie MacCaskill, Ann MacLeod, Ann Marr and David Meikleham for their sterling work in counting of the offerings after each service.

The Sunday School, Crèche and Youth Fellowship leaders without whom there would be no Christian education classes for our young people. I would like to make special mention of Margaret Deas, Fiona Stephenson, Liz MacDonald who have stepped in to help this year and to Roslynn O'Connor who has signed up for the Easter to Summer term.



Patrick & Jenni Jones and the rest of the Magazine Committee for all their work in producing such special magazines.

The **Door Teams** who give out not only the hymn books but also a smile and a warm welcome when you arrive at church. They are the first people that visitors to our church meet and as they say *You don't get a second chance to make a first impression.*

Our **Readers** who take an active part in our services. The teams who provide **tea and coffee after morning worship** and at functions like this and the **Coffee Morning** teams.

These are all the **known, visible** faces of Portree Church but there is also a vast host of **invisible** people without whom the church would not look or function as well as it does - those whose contributions are as important as any of those I have mentioned already – except the Minister !

The Sunday collection counters I've mentioned already ; those who dust, polish and vacuum floors in the church and mop floors elsewhere ; those who provide and arrange the floral decorations in the church each week ; those who deliver our church magazine not just to church members but also to others in the community ; those who provide transport for people to and from the church ; those who tend the church garden ; the construction of our church website ; the Prayer Fellowship and Ladies' Bible Study group who regularly pray not just for our church but also for individuals who need support.

There were two special events this year that I must mention - the visits of the two Moderators of the CoS who served during 2013. It was a bit like the old Glasgow joke about buses - you wait for ages for one to come and then two come one after the other ! **Rt. Rev Albert Bogle** did not preach or meet with the congregation during his short visit but he made comment on a church which was not just surviving after a difficult period but was growing in faith and numbers. The **Rt. Rev Lorna Hood** did preach and meet with the congregation and she enthused as much about the warmth of welcome she received as we enthused about her genuine interest in the congregation, particularly the children.

While these two eminent persons spoke warmly of their welcome in Portree it is equally, or perhaps nicer, to hear visitors speak about the warmth and friendliness of the congregation. That is all down to you !

If you are sitting there shrinking back into your chair saying to yourself "I don't do any of that" **DON'T !** - you are one of the congregation, you take an interest in the affairs of the church, you are giving the church - **YOUR CHURCH** - your support.

To everyone, those here and the rest of the congregation, a big thank you for making the church what it is.

And God bless you all,

Wm Marshall