

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Uniting Act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland of 2nd October 1929 stated *inter alia*:-

“In 1843 there occurred the cleavage in the Church of Scotland historically known as the Disruption where a large section of the Church, severing ecclesiastical connection with the State on grounds set forth in the Claim, Declaration and Protest of the General Assembly, 1842 and the Protest, 1843 formed the Free Church of Scotland.”

In the same year the Free Church Divinity College was set up in Aberdeen to train Ministers for the Free Church. The training of Ministers, first for the Free Church, thereafter for the United Free Church and latterly, in conjunction with the University of Aberdeen, for the Church of Scotland, has been the main function of the College ever since. Starting in 1843 funds were raised and funds have continued to be raised over the years by gifts, legacies and public subscription.

In 1900 the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church formally united to form the United Free Church of Scotland. Until that time the College had been called “The Free Church College” and thereafter it was called “The United Free Church College”.

On 2nd October, 1929 the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland united as “the Church of Scotland”.

In the early 1930’s negotiations took place between the College, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and The University of Aberdeen with regard to the future of the teaching of Divinity in Aberdeen. Agreement was reached in 1936 and in broad terms the basis of agreement was that all academic subjects would be taught at King’s College, Aberdeen and “such further teaching as is required by the Church of Scotland alone for the training of her students for the Ministry shall be given at Alford Place College”. At some date between 29th October, 1936 and 18th February, 1937 the name of the College was changed to “Christ’s College, Aberdeen”.

The Main College Building at Alford Place continued to be used for teaching until May, 1986 when it was decided that all classes would be held at King’s College. Thereafter the buildings at Alford Place were sold, the proceeds being invested for the continuing benefit of the College and its rôle in training ministers for the church including providing funds in support of one of the lectureships in Practical Theology in the University.

With the sale of the Main College Building, it was necessary to find a new home for the College Library. An agreement was made with the University whereby certain items were lodged in the main University Library with the bulk of the College’s Library being combined with the Divinity Class Library and housed in the present accommodation in King’s College known as the Divinity Library. The College maintains the library as a resource for **all** under-graduates studying in the present Department of Divinity and Religious Studies and provides a budget each year for the purchasing of text books and periodicals. The Financial Board of the College also employs the Librarian.

THE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COLLEGE

The Financial Board of Christ's College seeks to serve the College in the fulfilment of its rôle in the formation of candidates for the Church of Scotland ministry and ministers of the Church of Scotland studying at the University of Aberdeen. To this end it administers the various bequests, legacies and funds held by the College for this purpose :

- by providing financial support to the University in its provision of appropriate courses and library resources,
- through the financial support of candidates, especially in emergency situations,
- by providing financial support to ministers of the Church studying for the Aberdeen-Pittsburgh D Min degree,
- through the payment of bursaries and prizes(the latter open to **all** students studying divinity and theological subjects not just Church of Scotland Candidates),
- through making provision of seminars, lectures, retreats and other activities organised by the Master appropriate in the training of candidates for the ministry
- by providing the necessary support for the Master in carrying out his spiritual, pastoral and supervisory responsibilities in relation to candidates and thereby helping to maintain a collegiate community centred on worship, the latter finding expression in the Chapter Service held every Friday in King's College Chapel during term time.