

Rev. John F. Anderson – A Ruglonian, Mr. Anderson was educated at Rutherglen Academy and Glasgow University from which he graduated M.A. in 1962 and B.D. in 1965. He was licensed by Glasgow Presbytery in the cathedral of that city and served first as an assistant in Stonelaw Church, Rutherglen for two years before taking up his first independent charge at St. Andrew's Church, Bo'ness in 1966, at the time being the youngest parish minister in Scotland.



On arriving in Aberdeen in 1975, he took a deep interest in all aspects of parish life and worked tirelessly at getting to know people, greatly aided by his phenomenal memory for faces and names and showing a genuine interest in parishioners as well as members of the congregation. Due in no small measure to his leadership, inspiration, energy and enthusiasm, the congregation grew to almost 2000 members and services were well attended, to the extent that on a few occasions, members had to be turned away at communion services because all seats had been taken. Continuing a family commitment over two generations, he was particularly interested in the Boys' Brigade but took a keen interest and gave encouragement to all the church organisations.

Mr. Anderson's strong faith was central to all he did in his ministry and personal life. A devoted pastor, pastoral care was always extremely important to him and early in his Mannofield ministry a Pastoral Care Group was set up with volunteers visiting the elderly and housebound and this group continues to be active.

Mr Anderson was also school chaplain to Braeside, Airyhall Primary and Hazlehead Academy. He valued the contact with both staff and pupils and was very touched when the head boy of Hazlehead presented him with a scroll designed by the Art department to mark his 25 years (to that point) of chaplaincy work. Apparently, the school inspectors commented that they had never seen anything similar before.

Mr. Anderson himself was a caring friend to many and always available to those in need. A succession of divinity students from Aberdeen University spent a year at Mannofield under Mr. Anderson's supervision and he ensured that they received a good training in all aspects of a minister's job which they found very helpful after they had their own charge and a number remained firm friends for many years.

Under Mr. Anderson's guidance, a very successful fund-raising campaign provided sufficient funds not only for a new hall to be added and opened in 1981 marking the centenary of Mannofield in 1982 but also a sum of money similar to that required to build the hall was donated to a central fund for housing of retired ministers and was used to buy a house in Alford.

After a distinguished ministry with exemplary dedication and commitment to his congregation and the church nationally, Mr. Anderson retired in 2006 and moved to Montrose with his wife Elizabeth where they both quickly became involved in local matters. Never one to be idle, Mr. Anderson was very active in his retirement, in demand as a preacher in the area and acting as interim moderator at several churches in Angus Presbytery. He died in 2016 and is remembered with affection by his many friends in Angus as well as in Aberdeen.