

# Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER



## Dr John Douglas

A Great Man of God

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## Editorial

“You have all the watches, but we have all the time,” is a quote I heard recently at a Missionary Deputation meeting. The words were a necessary rebuke to all who heard; it is commonplace for Christians to be simultaneously busy and yet spiritually unproductive. Is it not the case, particularly in Western Christendom, that we are masters of organisation and yet lacking when it comes to power with God and men? Mrs Jayne Creane touches on a similar theme in this issue's Word for Women article - I recommend that both men and women read it.

Many of us would love nothing more than to find more time, but we know this is not possible. What is possible is to take on board the Scriptural injunction to 'redeem' the time (Ephesians 5:16). I recall the late Dr Douglas commenting powerfully upon those words of Paul. Dr Douglas focused the attention of his hearers on the word 'circumspectly' (verse 15). In the way that only he could preach, God's servant developed the meaning behind this word - the idea of circumference. The illustration was clear and impossible to deny. The wise, time-redeeming believer is one who looks all around. The walk is a discerning one, not a foolish one.

Another year is drawing to a close, with 2025 fast approaching. If God spares our lives to reach another New Year, let us not be so busy filling our calendars with dates, plans, ideas, and objectives and yet fail to use the time we have now for the Lord. ■

✉ Editor,  
[editor@fpvision.org](mailto:editor@fpvision.org)



“We all have our own precious memories of Dr Douglas, but, praise God, he has gone in to see the King in all His beauty, and he is forever with the Lord whom he loved and served. He was certainly a true man of God, whose spiritual legacy will no doubt continue to be a blessing.”

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**“Like any walk, our walk with God is something we must prepare for, keep track of, and encourage one another in.”**

I wonder how many steps you took today? What about yesterday? How about this week or even this month? Some of us have become obsessed with tracking our progress and challenging ourselves to go that little bit further every day. If you are an avid walker or runner, your footwear is something you have spent plenty of time considering. Functionality and flexibility were probably ahead of fashionability in your choice of footwear - if you are concerned about the well-being of your feet, that is!

You may not like the thought of feet, but the Bible reminds us that feet are important to consider. When standing on holy ground, the Lord commanded Moses to do so barefoot (Exodus 3:3-5). When describing God’s messengers, the Holy Spirit led Isaiah to speak of beautiful feet, because their feet carried good tidings of peace and salvation (Isaiah 52:7). The Lord’s humble washing of His disciple’s feet often steps on the toes of our pride. That God manifest in the flesh would lower Himself to the position of a servant shocked His disciples and still amazes us today (John 13:5-17). Mary’s anointing and wiping of Jesus’ feet in preparation for His burial is also striking (John 12:1-7). These are but a few examples of how the Bible speaks of feet.

I think it is fair to say that our feet are worthy of some attention and remind us of our daily walk with God. Like any walk, our walk with God is something we must prepare for, keep track of, and encourage one another in (Hebrews 10:24). ‘How?’ is the question. The best compass to consider in our life’s walk is Christ. Think of Jesus as He made His way from the Last Supper to the garden of Gethsemane, from there to torture and trial through to His triumph over sin when He stepped foot out of the grave. In Genesis 3:15, God foretold of Christ’s heel being bruised for our redemption. For that to happen, Christ first had to plant His pure and perfect human feet here on earth and walk among us. He took thousands of steps for the sole purpose of fulfilling all righteousness on our behalf to the glory of the Father (Matthew 3:15). This He did, so that His final sacrifice for sin would be accepted as our ransom (1 Peter 1:18-19). Ultimately, Christ submitted to the piercing of His own feet for the benefit of ours. Through His vicarious suffering, we are now enabled to walk daily in His victory. Think back over the last few days and weeks, track your steps, and ask yourself this simple question, ‘Have I been walking daily in Christ’s victory?’ (Galatians 5:16). ■

✍ **Rev Aaron Fitzsimons,**  
*John Knox Free Presbyterian Church.*





# Dr John Douglas

## A Great Man of God

*“Dr Douglas carried out a ministry for the Lord spanning seven decades. It was a ministry that was signally blessed by the Lord, not only at home, but also reaching far beyond our shores.”*

**A**s King David led the mourning for Abner, he followed the coffin and wept at the grave. He then paid tribute to Abner in the words of 2 Samuel 3:38, ‘Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?’ To the glory of God, I say that Dr Douglas was a great man - a great man of God.

### HIS EARLY DAYS AND CONVERSION TO CHRIST

Dr Douglas was the eldest of a family of four, three boys and one girl. His early days were spent living at his grandfather’s farm. He loved the countryside, but the family then moved into East Belfast. As a young boy in Belfast, he lived through

the Second World War. He was able to share memories of the blitz in Belfast, as he remembered the sound of bombs descending and then the noise of those bombs hitting their target. By the Lord’s mercy, he was spared.

Dr Douglas’ mother was keen for him to go to Sunday School; and, along with friends, he joined the church at the bottom of Ravenhill Road. Shortly after he joined the Sunday School, the church called a new minister. That new minister was Reverend Ian Paisley. As he attended the Sunday School, young John learned the necessity of being saved and soon came under conviction of sin. The Second Coming of Christ

was a subject of great interest to him even back then. He knew at that time, if the Lord was to come, he was not ready.


One day after Sunday School, he stayed behind, and when one of the teachers asked him what he wanted, he made it known that he wanted to get saved. The teacher called the minister, who was there at the time, and both got down on their knees. Thirteen-year-old John Douglas called upon the name of the Lord and was gloriously saved. Dr Paisley often referred to John Douglas as his first convert in the Ravenhill Road Church. It was 1946 when the teenage John Douglas started out for the Lord. What a real trophy of grace he would prove to be!

## MINISTRY AND HOME

He joined the youth fellowship in the church, and it was there he got his first opportunity to preach. Later, the Lord would call him into the ministry. On entering the ministry, he would become a very close colleague of Dr Paisley and even served as usher at his wedding.

Dr Douglas proved to be a wonderful blessing to so many, but first and foremost he was a blessing to his family. Married in 1959 to Margaret Balmer, they had a daughter called Margaret. Sadly, his wife passed away, and in very trying times he proved the faithfulness of the Lord. In April of 1969, Dr Douglas married Eunice Beattie. Together they had five children: Linda, Ruth, Marana, John, and David. Dr Douglas was a much-loved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Dr Douglas was a blessing to our whole denomination, serving for approximately thirty years as Clerk of Presbytery. His guidance and wisdom as Clerk of Presbytery proved invaluable. Paying tribute to Dr Douglas at the Presbytery meeting of September 2024, the Moderator Rev Samuel Murray stated, 'His love for the Lord and his love for God's Word caused him to give his life to the witness of the Free Presbyterian Church. His ministry was not only appreciated at home but

 **Below:** Dr Douglas and Dr Paisley.



all across the world. Nearly every minister had cause to turn to him for advice at least once. He was one of the irreplaceable spiritual giants of the Free Presbyterian Church.'

## HIS INCALCULABLE CONTRIBUTION


Dr Douglas was instrumental in the establishment of the Whitefield College of the Bible and held the position of Principal for 31 years. Over the years, he lectured in a range of subjects, including New Testament Greek, Hermeneutics, Biblical Exegesis, and Hebrew. What a privilege it was to sit in his lectures!

Under God, he shaped and prepared men and women to serve the Lord right around the world. The current Principal of the College, Rev Timothy Nelson, paid tribute to the founding Principal by saying, 'His incalculable contribution to the life and work of the College must be acknowledged. We are in his debt, and we return thanks to the Lord for all that He was pleased to do through the life and labours of Dr Douglas.'

The Lord's servant was also a blessing to the Churches he pastored. He ministered in Portavogie, serving there for ten years. He experienced something of revival blessing in the town, with many souls getting saved. Dr Douglas was then called to the work in Moneyslane, ministering there for a further ten years. He loved the work and the people there, and they loved him to the extent that he never wanted to leave. However, believing it to be the will of the Lord, he accepted the call to Lisburn, a ministry that would continue for some forty-eight years, right up to his passing. What a tremendous blessing Dr Douglas has been to the congregation. He was greatly used of the Lord in the establishing and strengthening of the work.

Overall, Dr Douglas carried out a ministry for the Lord spanning seven decades. It was a ministry that was signally blessed by the Lord, not only at home, but also reaching far beyond our shores to many different countries.




 **Above:** Dr and Mrs Douglas

## HIS CHRISTLIKENESS

On a personal level, I can testify, like many others, that Dr Douglas was a blessing to me. He became a spiritual mentor. His advice, encouragement, and friendship proved on many occasions to be a means of strength to me in the ministry. He provided wise counsel that was always based on Scripture. He was a trusted confidant, and I knew that anything I shared with him was never repeated or carried. He was a faithful friend, and I count it a privilege to have been so close to Dr Douglas over the years. Words seem so inadequate to fully express the influence he has been, not only in my life, but in the lives of so many. Perhaps it is best summed up by referring to his Christlikeness - he was a man who lived close to the Lord.

We all have our own precious memories of Dr Douglas, but, praise God, he has gone in to see the King in all His beauty, and he is forever with the Lord whom he loved and served. He was certainly a true man of God, whose spiritual legacy will no doubt continue to be a blessing in the days ahead. The challenge from his passing is to carry on the work. There is a memorial stone in Westminster Abbey to John and Charles Wesley. At the base of that stone, a quotation by Charles Wesley is engraved. It states, 'God buries His workmen but carries on His work.' ■

 **Rev Ian Kenny,**  
*Hillsborough Free Presbyterian Church.*

# Whitefield College Graduation and Commencement



 Above: Graduates with the Moderator & Clerk of Presbytery

The annual Whitefield College of the Bible Graduation & Commencement Service was held this year in Ballymena. Rev Alan Smylie, College Academic Committee Convenor, conducted the service and welcomed a very large congregation.

After the opening praise, Rev Gordon Dane (Lecturer in New Testament Greek) offered prayer, and Deputy Moderator Rev Ian Brown (Lecturer in Historical Theology) read the Scriptures. Rev Smylie paid tribute to the work of College Principal, Rev Timothy Nelson, and invited him to bring his report and present diplomas to this year's graduates.

Mr Nelson referred to a series of significant changes that had taken place

during the college year. He referred to Rev John Douglas, founding Principal of the College, who had passed away

on 30<sup>th</sup> July. Mr Douglas had served as Principal for over 30 years and had lectured, at one time or another, in Greek, Hebrew, Hermeneutics, and Biblical Exegesis. His incalculable contribution to the life and work of the College was acknowledged, and his wife and family were assured of continued support in prayer.

Reference was also made to retiring Lecturers Rev John Armstrong (Hebrew) and Rev Ron Johnstone (Missionary Principles & Practices), now succeeded by Rev Marcus Lecky and Rev Ian Harris respectively. A further retirement saw the departure of Mrs Linda Bell as College Administrator. Mrs Bell's long and faithful service had been marked at a special end-of-term buffet in June.

Mr Nelson spoke of another successful year for the College. Appreciation



 Incoming students with the Principal



📖 Above: Stephen Greer with his father



📖 Above: Jonny Eccles with his minister, the Moderator

was expressed for the opportunity to highlight the work of the College at this year's Easter Convention. He thanked all who had supported this vital work prayerfully and practically. He acknowledged Lecturers and Students and the Academic and Management Committees and their respective Convenors, Rev Smylie and Mr Norman McIlroy. Mr Nelson also expressed appreciation to the Martyrs' congregation and to Mr Peter Lunn, Caretaker, for his continued assistance.

The Principal reported that two new students were beginning studies this year. Richard Edwards and John McNeill are both members of the Enniskillen congregation.

Mr Nelson spoke warmly of the graduates: Jonathan Eccles (Portavogie), Greg Gibson (Ballymoney), Stephen Greer (Ballymena), Jonathan Jordan (Magherafelt), and Sharon Van Harberden (Canada) – the last of whom was graduating in absentia, having already travelled to Kenya to begin missionary service. Diplomas were presented, and the Lord's guidance and blessing were wished for every graduate.

Mr Nelson concluded by urging continued prayer for the College, referring to the new building project at Tandragee, for which much preparation had been made over recent months. Clerk of Presbytery Rev John Greer (Lecturer in Systematic

Theology) put the prescribed questions to the four men who were to be licensed, and the Moderator, Rev Samuel Murray (Lecturer in Pastoral Theology), oversaw the act of licensing and offered prayer.

In a challenging message based on Proverbs 3:5-6, Mr Murray urged the graduates to continue in faith and to allow nothing to divert them from the work to which God had called them.

Mr Norman McIlroy (Management Committee Convenor) offered prayer and thanksgiving for the supper kindly arranged and prepared by the ladies of the Ballymena congregation. The offering for College funds exceeded £1900. ■

# Whitefield College of the Bible

## Entrance Examinations

Entrance Examinations for prospective candidates for the Theological Course at the Whitefield College for the year beginning September 2025 will take place at the Whitefield College on the following dates:

<b>Monday 24 February 19.00</b>	English Grammar
<b>Tuesday 25 February 19.00</b>	English Language & Expression
<b>Wednesday 26 February 19.00</b>	History

Candidates must report by 18.50 and are expected to provide their own writing paper. All candidates should forward the Entrance Examination Fee of £40 (for each subject) before 3 February 2025 to:

*Whitefield College of the Bible, 356 Ravenhill Road, Belfast BT6 8GL*  
E: [whitefieldcollege@icloud.com](mailto:whitefieldcollege@icloud.com) (Email for Bank Transfer details)

## Dromore's Penny Collection



**Left:** Pictured left to right are Christine Robinson, Samuel Morrison, and Christine Ward, who, along with Leanne Haffey, form the Children's Meeting Committee in Dromore.

**F**or many years, the children who attend Dromore Free Presbyterian Children's Meeting have collected pennies for a missionary cause over the course of the year. This year, the pennies will go towards the work in Uganda. The children enjoyed learning about the work there via photographs and videos sent by the Carscadden family. This year's bottle total was £1150.26. ■

## Agahlee Shorter Catechism Excellence



**A**ndrew Tinsley and Calvin Salt who recently completed all 107 questions in the Shorter Catechism. They are pictured with Mr Alistair Park who asked the questions, Sunday School teacher Mrs Denise Park, and Rev Salt. ■

## Sunday School Achievements in Ballymena



**Above:** Children who successfully answered all questions of the Child's Catechism. (L to R) Caleb McClintock, Isla McCosh, Maisie McAuley, Emily McClintock, Sofia Greer, Amy Greer, Martha-Lily Maternaghan and Annie Blaney.



**Above:** Kaitlyn Millen, Tom Riddle, Deborah Bell, and Ruby Rea receiving their Bibles and cups for the Junior Bible Exam. Included in the photograph is Rev Stewart, Mr James McCosh (Superintendent), and Rev Greer.



**Above:** Lewis Maternaghan receiving a Bible and Cup for successfully answering all questions of the Shorter Catechism. Included in the photograph is Rev Stewart, Mr James McCosh (Superintendent), and Rev Greer.

## Ballynahinch Milestones

**Below (L-R):** Stephen Moore, Graeme Martin, Samantha Martin, Lauren Cranston & Hannah Foster. Either side are Rev Stephen McCrea and Mr Stephen Kyle (Elder).



**T**hursday 19<sup>th</sup> September was a special occasion for the Ballynahinch congregation as five believers were baptised in Hillsborough Free Presbyterian Church (kindly granted). ■

**Below:** Mrs Elma Dick was presented with a gift in recognition of her faithful organ playing for 25 years in the congregation.



## Rev Jim Hartin

### Goes Home to Glory

On 9<sup>th</sup> September month, our good friend and brother Rev Jim Hartin went home to glory. He will be greatly missed by us all. Jim was a very godly man who loved and served the Lord with all his heart. From the day he was saved, until the moment he entered into his eternal rest, his only purpose in life was to glorify His Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Rev Hartin was a man of prayer with a great passion for the souls of men. During his ministry in Portavogie and Mount Merrion, he had the joy of leading many to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. He loved missionary work and supported and prayed for those who had left all to go to the mission field to serve the Lord.

Mr Hartin never lost his zeal for the work of God, and even in his retirement, he continued to encourage all of God's servants in their labours for the Master. During Rev Hartin's retirement, he helped out in a number of our churches. The service that he rendered in Tandragee in visitation was greatly appreciated. Our good friend has truly left us all a great example to follow. There is no doubt that Rev Hartin has heard that 'Well done thou good and faithful servant' from the Saviour.

We pray for his dear wife Elizabeth and for Philip, Cherith, and Rachel, that the Lord will fill the vacant chair and give them grace in the days ahead.

'...Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.'

Revelation 14:13. ■

✓ **Rev John Gray,**  
*Tandragee Free  
Presbyterian Church.*



## Mrs Ann Foster

### Tribute by Education Board of Presbytery to Mrs Ann Foster, founding Principal and pioneer Christian School teacher.

For 27 years Mrs Ann Foster was Principal of the first Christian School founded within the Free Presbyterian Church. She taught for a further two years before retirement in June 2008. Mrs Foster, along with her husband, was convinced that they could not send their own children to Fivemiletown High School. Mrs Foster should have known for she held a teaching a post in the same school!

As parents they decided to remove their children from state education and instruct them at home. The cost, as to earnings or career success, was never a consideration. Upon hearing of this plan, parents in the Kilskeery congregation asked that their children would also be taught in a Christian environment.

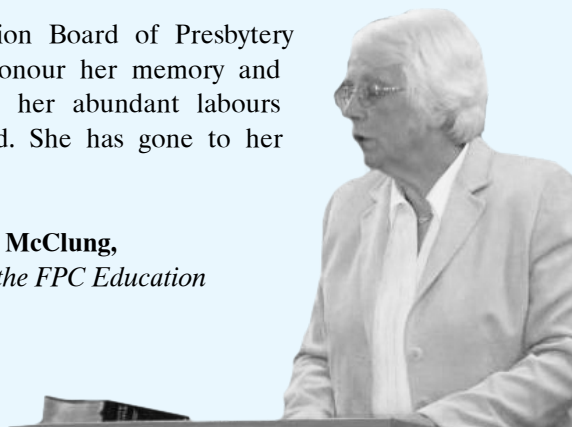
Mrs Foster was eminently qualified to lead this work. She was led to the Lord as a young girl by her godly father. Upon coming to Belfast to study she attended Ravenhill Free Presbyterian Church where she consecrated her life to the Lord, to do whatever He wanted her to do.

Academically Mrs Foster was more than capable of teaching the wide range of subjects required in a Christian School. Her mantra was, 'If a teenager can understand this subject then so can I'. Upon finishing her own schooldays in Ballymena Academy she had won three prizes and scholarships and so began to study three languages at Queen's University.

Mrs Foster was wholly committed, as to time and effort, to setting up the School, developing a Christian curriculum and then helping additional schools commence. This work would require much prayer and wrestling with God for the work would face much opposition. Furthermore, only by prayer would the pupils advance spiritually and academically. Mrs Foster was fervent in her love for children and earnest in prayer for them.

The Education Board of Presbytery desires to honour her memory and acknowledge her abundant labours for the Lord. She has gone to her reward. ■

✓ **Rev Brian McClung,**  
*Convenor of the FPC Education  
Board.*





'...ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.'

John 1 v 51

## Snakes and Ladders

The board game 'Snakes and Ladders' is loved by children all over the world. Having originated in India, there was a time when 'Snakes and Ladders' was not played just for fun. Ideas of morality were tied into the game, with the thought being that, if you do good, you will go up and get a heavenly reward, but if you do bad you will go down and be punished.

God's Word makes it clear that such thinking is not right. The Bible says that we are all born as sinners, and therefore we are already on that slippery downwards slope that leads to eternal punishment. No amount of good works on our part will remove the condemnation we find ourselves under. However, the goodness of the Lord Jesus and the work that He did on the cross is our only means of salvation and a heavenly reward ... and it is all

connected with 'Snakes and Ladders' - the 'Snakes and Ladders' of the Bible!

Snakes or serpents, as they are referred to in the Bible, have from the very beginning had strong associations with sin, temptation, and Satan. In the garden of Eden, the Devil came in the form of a serpent and with great subtlety tempted Eve and then Adam into eating the forbidden fruit. Having disobeyed God, suddenly everything changed, not just for Adam, but for all mankind forever. We are all on the same slippery downwards slope, and no amount of doing good can change that.

So, what do we do? How can we get away from the punishment we rightly deserve for our wrongdoing? Well, just as it is in the game of 'Snakes and Ladders', we need a ladder. We need to get onto that ladder and up and away to safety. In John 1:51, the Lord Jesus made it clear that He

was that ladder when He said, '...ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.'

The Saviour was referring here to an incident in Genesis. A young man called Jacob was on the run. A life of cheating and trickery had turned everyone against him. Worn-out, and with nightfall coming, Jacob lay down to rest. Jacob knew that his sinful behaviour had shut him out, not just from his family, but from God and from heaven. In a dream, God showed Jacob a ladder that reached from earth to heaven. Jacob realised that there was a way back to God. That ladder was and still is the Son of God. By faith, all who step onto Him will be carried safely and upwardly to heaven. I wonder where you stand today, on the snake or on the ladder? ■



### QUIZ

As well as being a ladder, the Lord Jesus had many other descriptive titles. Which of the titles (right) does not describe the Saviour?



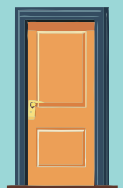
LIGHT

BREAD



LAMB

DOOR



KEY



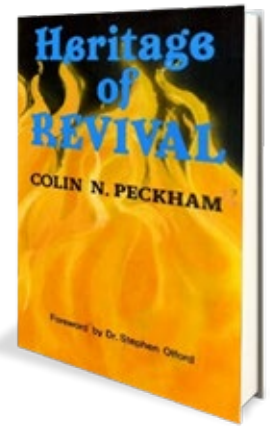
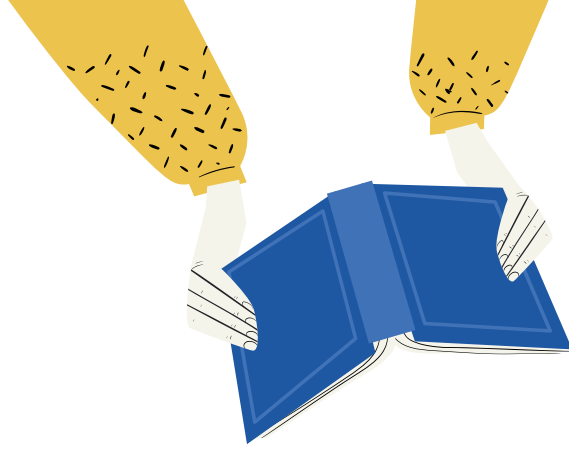
Helpful references:

John 10v9, John 1v29, John 6v35, John 8v12

ANSWER:

Are you 12 or under?

Send your answer, name, address and church to:  
Rev Garth Wilson e: [answer@fpvision.org](mailto:answer@fpvision.org)



# HERITAGE OF REVIVAL

BY COLIN N. PECKHAM

I picked this book up some years back in Gowan's Bookshop in County Fermanagh. Little did I know at the time that in the years following, right to this day, I would find it a captivating and challenging read. With the exception of the Bible, no other publication has made such an impression upon me. I read it every year! I am always greatly encouraged when I reach page 48 and read about the Revival at Annaghmore, where I come from.

The book details a century of God's working in a remarkable way throughout the United Kingdom. It is very reassuring to remember He is yet working, and can, in these days, send times of revival blessing. He used human instruments, and still does in our day.

## MOTIVATION

The workers were initially sent to preach the Gospel in the hamlets, villages, and small towns of Scotland. They were to 'shew forth the praises of Him' who called them 'out of darkness into His marvellous light' (1Peter 2:9). They did so from full hearts, having a steadfast love for the Lord, and a great desire to bring glory to Him. That a sincere love for the Saviour

was their motivation, was evident wherever they went. In 2024, the Lord still wants folk like you and me to serve Him because we love

Him, not motivated by guilt, but with a heart of love. As we consider all that the Lord has done for us, may that love for Him, so evident in the lives of and sacrifices made by those who served one hundred years ago, be our motivation.

## COMPASSION

Having experienced the new birth, those who went forth with the Gospel had a great passion for souls. Often living conditions were far from luxurious, travelling was difficult, and rejection frequent enough; but the instruments, knowing the value of a soul, laboured on consistently. These are not revival days in which you and I serve. Love for sin and indifference to the message of saving grace, as well as unprecedented hardness, is encountered at every turn. Let us make sure we do not allow the spiritual climate to turn us into hardened individuals. May we all pray for tender, compassionate hearts and that our love for the souls of those around us will never wane. We could do no better than to consider the example of Christ in Mathew 9:36, 'But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.'

## RECOGNITION

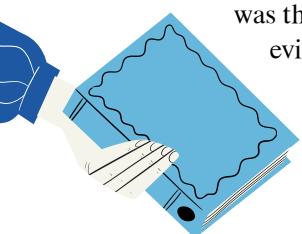
While some names became well known, the names of many others who worked tirelessly are long forgotten. Seeking recognition can grieve the

Lord. Those folk did not seek it. In Romans 16, the apostle mentions a whole list of people who had been helps along the way. Many of those in that chapter are only mentioned once in the Word of God, yet the work they did was important. They were clearly vital 'links in the chain'. Contentedness and joy is the portion of men and women who labour for the 'well done of God'. Perhaps, in your niche, no one has noticed what you do - do not be concerned about that. Just remember 1 Corinthians 15:58: 'Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'

## DEDICATION

The dedication of those mentioned in *Heritage of Revival* meant self-denial. Sometimes jobs with prospects were forfeited, positions of honour in society were turned away from, and even legitimate ambitions were set aside. There is always some cost in following the Lord fully. Dedication is called for at this time. May we each seek to have the necessary spirit expressed in Philippians 3:14, 'I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' If, sometime, you have an opportunity to purchase a copy of this book, I think you will be uplifted, challenged, and inspired by it. ■

✉ Rev Cairin Salt,  
Aghalee Free Presbyterian Church.





# The Christmas Commission

John 3:17 often sits in the shadows of verse 16, which is so often preached upon, and rightly so, because it is a verse which sums up the whole Gospel message. However, verse 17 very much stands on its own as well, because it details for us why God gave His only begotten Son. Verse 16 speaks of the love of God, and verse 17 speaks of the demonstration of that love, in that He sent His Son into the world.

Whatever other matters there are to think about at this time of the year, remember that God sent His Son. In the mind of the eternal Godhead, from before the foundation of this world, from before ever man was

created, the Messiah was promised. The triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - planned redemption, promised redemption, and sent the Redeemer into this world to attain that redemption for sinners. The Son was commissioned and sent into this world to be the Redeemer. At Christmas time, we give thanks to God that He sent His Son into this world of sin in order to redeem us from sin. We thank Him for the Christmas Commission.

## THE MESSAGE

What is the message? Verse 17 is a verse of contrasts – it contrasts the negative with the positive. It starts off in a negative manner in order to emphasise the positive at the end of the verse. In the opening words, ‘For God sent not His into the world’ - the use of the negative ‘not’ is used to show the reason why God sent His Son into the world. But it is not casting doubt upon this reality, nor saying that God did not send His Son; rather, it is affirming and re-affirming that God did send His Son into the world.

The story of the Incarnation is not some fairy tale of man, but it is a reality. We are not dealing here with fanciful notions but rather with facts. God did send His Son into the world.

## He was promised

The promise of the Saviour can be traced right back to the time when our first parents fell into sin in Eden – just after they fell, the promise was given that a Saviour would come to restore and reconcile man to God. That relationship had been broken because of sin, but God promised to send a Saviour in Genesis 3:15. That promise was fulfilled in Christ’s coming into this world, the One who was ‘...made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law...’

## He was prophesied

Many hundreds of years before Christ came, the prophet Isaiah spoke of His coming and prophesied concerning His coming. Isaiah 9:6 states, ‘For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...’ The verse goes on to speak of the power, the pre-eminence, and the

“THE STORY OF THE INCARNATION IS NOT SOME FAIRY TALE OF MAN, BUT IT IS A REALITY. WE ARE NOT DEALING HERE WITH FANCIFUL NOTIONS BUT RATHER WITH FACTS. GOD DID SEND HIS SON INTO THE WORLD.”

person of Christ, the Child who would be born. Christ took our humanity into union with His divine nature, yet still remained fully God. He did not empty Himself of deity, or of any of His divine attributes. He did not empty Himself of any of His essential glory. He remained God, yet was made man.

That child about whom Isaiah spoke and that Son about whom Isaiah prophesied was the one who was sent of God, who lay in the manger in Bethlehem.

### THE MARVEL

The verse speaks of the Lord being 'sent'. The word sent means to be set apart for a particular mission or to be commissioned for a particular role, and that is exactly what is in view in the Incarnation of Christ. In His coming into this world, He was 'sent' - He was set apart for a particular role. The word 'sent' is also where we get the word 'apostle' from, and Christ was sent as the Great Apostle of our profession. In John 6:2, Jesus answered and said unto them, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.'

Christ was sent and set apart for service and work - that work was redemption. This shows that redemption originated with God; it was the pre-determined plan of God to redeem sinners. And as we think of this, we are brought to consider again the love of God. God so loved that He gave His Son, and God so loved that He sent His Son into this world to die to save His people from their sin.

He was sent to a world that knew Him not, to a people that rejected Him, hated Him, and wanted nothing to do with Him - what a marvel! He was

sent, which in itself is a marvel, but an even greater marvel is that He was sent to sinners who deserved nothing of His love or mercy but deserved the wrath of God. This world deserves God's wrath; but, in love, God sent His Son to be the Saviour of this world.

At this time of the year, we remember the fact that love came down in the Person of Jesus Christ. Love came down to a world that displayed no love to God, and yet love came down. That is the marvel of the Christmas commission, that in love God sent His Son to a world that knew Him not.

### THE MISSION

Did Christ come to condemn the world? No, He came to save the world. He came not to condemn but that the world through Him might be saved.

The Jews believed that, when the Messiah would come, He was coming in great power and glory to judge the world and to condemn the world. Yet the Lord came in humility and lowliness to redeem and to reconcile the world.



The first advent of Christ was not a mission of condemnation; rather, it was a mission of salvation. In John 12:46-47, Christ repeats this truth, 'I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness...for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.'

The first mission of Christ into this world was to seek and save that which was lost. As a result of sin, this world was condemned, and we were lost in our sin. And yet Christ came into this world to save sinners from that condemnation, 'that the world through Him might be saved.' This points to the truth that Christ is the only Saviour of sinners, there is no other Saviour, and there is no salvation outside of Christ. Christ came to save by His perfect life and His atoning sacrifice at Calvary.

This is the message of Christ's coming the first time. Yet, He is coming again! The next time He comes, it will be in condemnation and with the purpose of judging the world for its rejection of Him and His work and the only way of salvation. That is why the sinner must repent and turn from sin and by faith lay hold of Christ alone for salvation. For the Christian, it is a reminder that we must seek to labour on for Christ and seek to win the lost for Him.

'For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved.' John 3:17. ■

✍ **Rev Garth Wilson,**  
*Sandown Free Presbyterian Church.*

“ THIS WORLD DESERVES GOD'S WRATH;  
BUT, IN LOVE, GOD SENT HIS SON TO BE  
THE SAVIOUR OF THIS WORLD. ”



# SUMMER CAMP

## REPORT

**D**uring the week at camp, we took part in various activities like Team Olympics. However, this year we were also blessed to be able to go to places such as Let's Go Hydro and We Are Vertigo. The mixture of activities allowed us to have time with everyone who attended camp.

The meetings this year were taken by Rev P Foster and Rev P Thompson who both brought helpful messages. One which stood out was from 1 Kings 22 when we learned about Micaiah and how he stood up for God. Another

was a message on 2 Corinthians 3 as we learned that we must gaze on God's glory in order to grow. The meetings at camp allowed us to learn more about God and His love for us.

For me, the highlight of camp every year is the campfire on the last night. This year was particularly emotional for me since it was my last. My friends and I had the chance to share blessings from the week and give our testimonies. Hearing other people's testimonies and how God has worked in their lives was such an encouragement. The leaders at camp encourage, give advice, or a

listening ear to anyone who needs it, and I am so grateful for every leader who attended camp this year. Camp has always been such a blessing for me, and I have attended the Youth Council Camp since 2021. I can wholeheartedly say that every year has been a blessing and an encouragement in my walk with God. Camp has given me my closest Christian friends; without it, I would not have met them. The memories made at camp this year and in previous years will be ones I will cherish for years to come. ■

✉ Sarah Glenn

## YOUTH COUNCIL DATES

More details of each of these events can be found at [fpcyouth.org](http://fpcyouth.org) or on Facebook and Instagram at *FPC Youth Council*. Alternatively, speak to your local YF leader or delegate.

### EVENINGS OF PRAYER

- » *South Down, 8<sup>th</sup> Nov: Venue TBC*
- » *Greater Belfast & North Down: Belfast Mission will be in the place of prayer evenings*
- » *West: TBC*
- » *South West: 15<sup>th</sup> Nov, 8pm: Aughnacloy FPC*

### 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY JOINT YOUTH MISSIONS

- 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> Nov, 8pm: Mount Merrion FPC Various Speakers*
- 7<sup>th</sup>+8<sup>th</sup> Dec, 8pm: Aughnacloy FPC Various Speakers*

### HISTORICAL TRIP to Kent 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024

### CHRISTMAS MARKETS OUTREACH 16<sup>th</sup> Nov

### DELEGATES' MEETING 18<sup>th</sup> Nov, Newtownabbey FPC

### INTER-FELLOWSHIP QUIZ Final Round, 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov

### CHRISTMAS MARKETS OUTREACH 7<sup>th</sup> Dec

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCYOUTH.ORG



A Word to Women

## Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World

**D**o you ever try to do it all? Housework, errands, looking after the children, employment, taxiing children, walking the dogs, church commitments, gym workouts, gardening, and trying to get 'me time' fitted in – it is in our nature and job description to try and do it all. Reading Joanna Weaver's book called *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World* recently, I was struck by her following quote: 'Being a woman requires more stamina, more creativity and more wisdom than ever was dreamed and that it is not just true for today's busy women, but it has always been the case.' It is important that we take care of the spiritual in our lives. The reality is we have so many duties and responsibilities which take up so much of our time

In Luke 10:38-42 we read about Martha being cumbered about with much serving and of the Lord's commendation of Mary in that she took time out to listen to His word. This is the tale of two sisters in a domestic setting. Can we see ourselves in either of them? We could say Martha was a good worker and a good manager; her home was always spotlessly clean. She was well-organised and could run a local ladies' group very well. She was meticulous and diligent. Here we find her – perhaps with an apron on – busy preparing vegetables; kneading

dough; pounding the grain; cutting the pomegranates; soaking the lentils; mixing a little chilli powder, paprika, and other spices which would give a little kick to the sauce into which the bread could be dipped. She did all this in a hot and sticky environment with the steam and aroma from the cooking, baking, and roast lamb in the oven, and with all the pressure she felt she was under, Martha cracked.

Where is Mary in all of this? She is not in the kitchen but in a quiet and contemplative manner, she is sitting calmly, chatting to the Lord and enjoying His presence and the spiritual food with which He was feeding her. Into the room bursts Martha and confronts her Saviour, blurting out irritably, 'Why is Mary sitting here doing nothing while I am swamped with work? Tell her to come and help me!'

Martha was troubled about many things. Her attitude towards her work was wrong because it left her frustrated and upset. Christ did not reprove Martha for working hard but for being anxious and worried about a multitude of things and how it takes the joy out of life. Jesus loved Martha and

appreciated her kindness, but Martha needed to learn that a good hostess must strive to keep that rare balance between the kitchen and fellowship with the family and with the ever-ever-present Guest.

Mary had chosen that good part, sitting at Jesus' feet. Mary found a magnetism in Jesus' words. Mary was aware there was plenty to do but was drawn to Christ's teachings, revealing truth to her hungry heart.

“  
*Christ did not reprove Martha for working hard but for being anxious and worried about a multitude of things and how it takes the joy out of life.*  
”

Can we see ourselves in Mary and Martha? Is part of us Mary – we want to worship and sit at Jesus feet – but part of us like Martha – there is just so much to do? Martha had opened her home to Jesus but not her heart. We must learn there is a time for work but also time for worship, learnt only from spending time at Jesus' feet. The Bible does not tell us how Martha responded to Christ's rebuke but further

reading in John 11 and 12 implies she humbled herself and learned from it, and so must we. Mark 6:31 says: 'Come ye yourselves apart ... and rest a while'. ■

✉ **Mrs Jayne Creane**  
*is married to Rev Jonathan Creane,  
Convoy Free Presbyterian Church.*

# John Kensit

It was the Anglican Reformers and martyrs who paid the heavy price to bring Biblical Protestantism to England. Their evangelical legacy continued into the 18<sup>th</sup> century with men like John Newton, George Whitefield, and the Wesley brothers. Our unsung saint continued in that noble line. John Kensit's father died before his son was born in London in 1855. He was reared by his godly mother on the Bible and books like Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Although initially attracted to Anglican ritualism, he embraced evangelical Protestant doctrine and professed faith in Christ while still in his teens.

A downside of The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1831 was its spur for Rome to seek expansion and reclaim England 'as Mary's dowry'. The more honest way was to seek to win converts openly. The second was to infiltrate the Church of England and take over the national church by stealth. Both these tactics alarmed the evangelicals in the Church of England, who bravely decided to fight back. The best-known Protestant protagonist within her communion was undoubtedly Bishop Ryle who proved that the pen was mightier than the sword. Not far behind came John Kensit.

One can see elements of William Farrell and John Knox in Kensit's tactics. He was not content with a mere pamphlet war nor mere pulpit denunciations. Elijah-like, he burst on the scene at St. Cuthbert's Church where a Roman service known as 'The Adoration of the Cross' was being held. The Anglican vicar uncovered the veiled crucifix and said, 'Behold the wood of the cross', to which the congregation responded, 'Come, let us adore it.' The clergy and then the laity crawled to the crucifix and kissed the marble representation of Christ on it. Kensit jumped up, seized the offending crucifix, and solemnly proclaimed, 'In the name of God, I denounce this idolatry in the Church of England – God help me.' The result was immediate. Perhaps the press headline, 'Brawling in a London church', was merely designed to sell more copies. Or, maybe, it was designed as a putdown – a counter-protest to that of the brave Protestant. Irrespectively, we can say, 'God meant it for good' and it gave precious publicity. Kensit was charged with 'being riotous, violent and indecent behaviour' in the church. Found guilty, Kensit was fined £3 with an alternative of seven days imprisonment. Although Kensit was prepared to go to prison 'as a vindication

of God's truth', he still wisely appealed the verdict and was acquitted.

Many more battles followed in the parish churches and in the church courts. His son, John Alfred, also took up the battle, spending time in Walton Gaol. Support for the Kensit protests was often open, while not a few secretly wished them well. It was not all negative. Out of these protests, the 'Wycliffe Preachers' were founded, who continue to exercise a distinctly gospel ministry.

In 1902, Kensit died as a result of an attack in Birkenhead while returning from another packed meeting. Despite heavy police protection (necessary because of several death threats), he was hit on the head with a huge chisel that had been thrown at him. He was rushed to hospital but died two weeks later of pneumonia and blood poisoning as a direct result of his injury. Amazingly, his attacker was later found not guilty of murder. The Protestant cause in England mourned his loss, with an estimated crowd of 20,000 lining the streets of Liverpool during his funeral. A monument marks his grave in Hampstead Cemetery. ■

✉ **Mr Colin Maxwell,**  
*Home Missionary.*



“Conversion ultimately leads to a changed life. Without a change, there is no conversion. The questions all of us must ask ourselves are: Am I converted? Have I been turned to God from idols?”



# CONVERSION

In our last article, we considered the doctrine of regeneration. From a theological perspective, this leads us naturally to consider the topic of conversion. The importance of the doctrine cannot be overstated. Jesus taught that without conversion one cannot get to Heaven: 'Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 18:3)

## THE DEFINITION OF THIS DOCTRINE

Conversion is a change of heart and mind through the operation of the Holy Spirit, usually through the Word of God. It consists of repentance, which is a turning to God and turning away from sin. Paul speaks of conversion in 1 Thessalonians 1:9 when he tells the believers of the change they experienced when they 'turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God'. 'Regeneration is the cause of conversion, or our turning to God. Regeneration is totally God's work; man is passive in it. But man is active in conversion. Regeneration precedes and is the immediate cause of conversion' (Dr A Cairns).

One of the Old Testament words used to convey conversion is often translated as 'turn' (2 Chronicles 7:14) or 'return' (Jeremiah 3:12). The New Testament word for repentance, Louis Berkhof writes, 'denotes primarily a change of mind, taking a wiser view of the past, including regret for the ill then done, and leading to a change of life for the better'.

Take time to read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 and you will see what New Testament conversion looks like.

## THE DISTORTION OF THIS DOCTRINE

Some people think they can turn to God and be converted any time they like. They forget that regeneration must precede conversion.

Others blatantly ignore Scripture by stating that conversion is not necessary, even though Jesus said, 'Except ye be converted ... ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' There is no need for change – just claim to be a Christian and that is all that is required, they say. Berkhof again helps us see the true nature of conversion: 'Conversion marks the conscious beginning, not only of the putting away of the old man, a fleeing from sin, but also of the putting on of the new man, a striving for holiness of life. The sinner consciously forsakes the old sinful life and turns to a life in communion with and devoted to God.'

For others, conversion is simply an emotional experience. Jonathan Edwards rebuffed this: 'True conversion is not just an emotional experience, but a complete reorientation of the heart and mind towards God.'

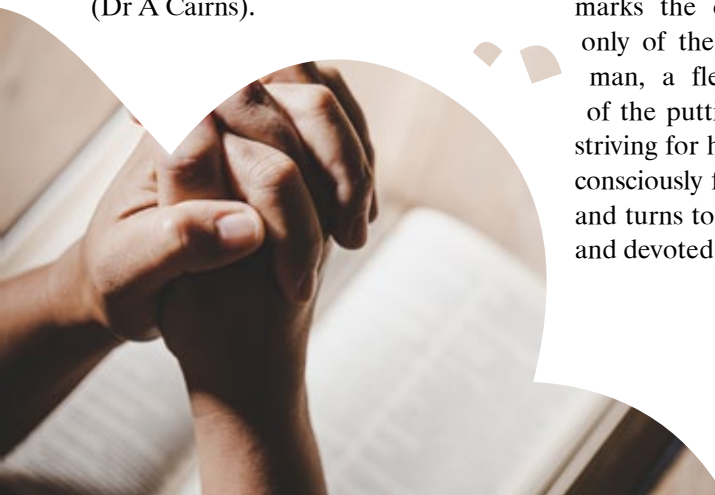
## THE DEMANDS OF THIS DOCTRINE

It is an absolute necessity (John 3:3,7. If God's saving mercy is to be experienced then conversion in turning to God from our evil ways is essential (Isaiah 55:7. Matthew 18:3). Conversion as the word implies denotes change or transformation. This spiritual and radical change is seen in every area of one's life. It changes his affections; things once loved are hated, and what was once hated is now loved. It involves a change of will, so that instead of wanting to do one's own will, the will of God is desired. We see this at Paul's conversion when he said, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' (Acts 9:6). Conversion transforms an individual's thinking. They have new views of God, indeed of the whole world.

Conversion ultimately leads to a changed life. Without a change there is no conversion. Calvin rightly said, 'True conversion is proved by the constant tenor of the life.' The question we all must ask ourselves is, am I converted? Have I turned to God from idols? ■

✉ Rev Wesley Irwin,  
Rutherglen Free Presbyterian Church.

“Regeneration must precede conversion.”





# Out of the Ivory Palaces

‘**R**ags to riches’ life stories always seem to grab the attention of publishers. Many readers are intrigued to learn how someone with very humble beginnings becomes very wealthy, influential, or even famous. However, at this time of year especially, we consider a much more thrilling story – an entirely factual story, an account beyond any comparison. We reflect on the incarnation of Christ, and we remember that the eternal Son of God left aside the splendour of Heaven to embrace a life of poverty. God the Son humbled Himself to be born of a virgin in the most meagre of conditions. In God’s plan of redemption, the Son left Heaven to live in poverty in the world, so that hell-deserving sinners could be brought from spiritual poverty to spiritual wealth. That is exactly what we read in 2 Corinthians 8:9, ‘For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.’ Here then, we have a story that is worth declaring to a perishing world: the story of Jesus and His love

“ *Why would the Saviour endure all of this humiliation? He became poor for our sakes, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* ”

## THE SPLENDOUR CHRIST LEFT

2 Corinthians 8:9 notes, ‘...though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor’. The story of Jesus does not begin at Bethlehem. At the manger, we see the prophesied incarnation come to fulfilment but let us never forget that Christ is eternal. He is God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity. His deity cannot be disputed. The early verses of John 1 remind us of His presence with God the Father at creation. In John 10, the Jews sought to stone Christ for stating that His Father and He are one. Later in the Gospels, Thomas is eventually persuaded of Christ’s resurrection when he sees the Saviour with his own eyes. The troubled disciple simply

declares, ‘My Lord and my God’. The fact that Jesus is God the Son is beyond dispute. Thus, we are taken to consider all that He left aside to come into this sin-cursed world to dwell among fallen men. Christ lived among men who failed to recognise that honour and praise was due to Him. Indeed, He was born among animals in an outhouse attached to an inn! The King of kings lived no affluent or luxurious life on this earth. The hymn-writer summarises well in the words:

*Out of the ivory palaces  
Into a world of woe  
Only His great eternal love  
Made my Saviour go.*



### THE LIFE CHRIST LIVED

We are reminded of the life Christ lived in the words, 'yet for your sakes he became poor'. Poverty, pain, and persecution were all prominent in the earthly life of the Saviour. At the incarnation, He was born in an outhouse. The wise men expected such a King to be born in a palace in Jerusalem, but they looked there in vain. Christ would know the hardships of life. He laboured as a carpenter. He hungered and thirsted. He grew weary and experienced pain. Christ's poverty was highlighted when He reminded one who desired to follow Him, 'Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not

Himself, suffered, and died to secure spiritual blessings for His people. The love of God for His people was the reason for His willingness to endure this poverty. Christ condescended to secure the salvation of His sheep.

### THE DEATH CHRIST DIED

Not only did the Saviour become poor for His people, but He died a most humiliating and agonising death for us. In God's eternal plan of salvation, Christ would be the Mediator between God and men. In 1 Timothy 1:15 we are informed, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save

sinner.' Christ came into the world to die at Calvary. Philippians 2:7&8 highlight the condescension of Christ which culminated in His crucifixion: 'But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' Crucifixion was a most agonising and shameful death. This method of execution is often said to have been reserved for slaves, servants, and the very worst of offenders. It was degrading and demeaning. Yet, in accordance with God's great plan of salvation, Christ willingly suffered all of this for sinners. Isaiah 53:5 explains, 'But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.' Christ endured this most humiliating of deaths to secure the salvation of His people.

The child of God can say, 'For my sake Christ came to this earth. For my sake He was rejected and despised by many. For my sake He went to Calvary. He suffered agony there as the wrath of God against my sin was poured out upon Him. There He bore the torment of Hell for me on that cross. He did it all for me. As my substitute, He took the punishment that was due to me.' Why would God the Son suffer such agony and humiliation? The answer is found in the words of 2 Corinthians 8:9, 'the grace our Lord Jesus Christ'. The love of God and Christ's love for His people - these are the reasons Christ suffered unimaginably for underserving sinners!

The 'old, old story of Jesus and His love' is thrilling indeed. Christ the Saviour is risen from the grave and ascended into Heaven. The Scriptures remind us that He will return to the earth. I wonder, do you look forward to that day or are you full of fear? Are you saved? ■

✉ **Rev Stephen Nelson,**  
*Rasharkin Free Presbyterian Church.*

# United Children's Camp



mini golf, Camp Olympics, swimming, a trip to Spruce Meadows Activity Farm, an assault course, and football coaching sessions, to name a few. Of course, the central part of the week was teaching the children about the Lord Jesus Christ through the Bible meetings and about the importance of prayer and service through the missionary meetings. Please join us as we continue to pray for those who have heard the Gospel and are not yet saved. Pray also for growth in those who have trusted Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

The first Children's Camp of 2024 commenced on 29<sup>th</sup> July with quite a few, new faces. We are thankful to the Lord for blessing us in many ways: sunshine each day, safety, new friendships, lots of fun and most of all, for the opportunity to share the Gospel and truth from God's Word with the boys and girls. Throughout the week the children were taught Psalm 121. It was wonderful to hear them recite this passage at the end of the week – many word perfect! In the mornings we enjoyed learning the missionary lesson of Corrie ten Boom. We also studied together the importance of having a 'Quiet Time'. Many children testified to this being very beneficial for them as they seek to live for the Lord. Each evening, we studied a passage from the Bible based on the theme: 'One Way'. The testimony time on Wednesday evening was a highlight as we listened to many children share publicly when they were saved by God's grace! We rejoice in God's goodness and pray that the Lord will continue to strengthen and keep these precious children and that they would be mightily used of God.

The second United Children's Camp of 2024 took place the following week. From the first prayer meeting of the team, just before the campers arrived, there was a real sense of unity regarding the week that lay ahead. As with the first camp, the Lord truly answered prayer, and we can say that it was a week of great blessing. The varied activities were enjoyed by all. These included

The United Children's Summer Camp commenced ten years ago in 2014, and this year witnessed the first occasion when one of our camp leaders was someone who had previously been a camper and was now joining us as an adult, to help teach other children about the things of God. For this and for our two weeks of camp we say – 'To God be the all the glory!' ■

✍ Rev Ryan McKee

*“This year witnessed the first occasion when one of our camp leaders was someone who had previously been a camper and was now joining us as an adult, to help teach other children about the things of God.”*





# Outreach to Spain

‘How good is your Spanish?’ This was the question asked when a group of twelve travelled under the banner of the Mission Board to help Alejandro Bernabeu and his wife, Vanesa, in their labours for God.

As a group, we flew to Alicante on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July and then travelled west for three hours before arriving at the church in Cortijos Nuevos, situated beautifully among mountains.

On the Lord’s Day we met the congregation and participated in the morning service. When singing the hymn, ‘Years I spent in vanity and pride’, as a group, we tried to sing the fourth verse in Spanish (although it was pretty dodgy). One young lady gave her testimony in Spanish (which was quite a feat) and I let Alejandro interpret for me as I preached on subject, ‘The LORD’s blessing to His people’. In the evening, we had an open air meeting in a nearby town. Various people took part in this meeting as well as the mid-week prayer meeting, with several giving their testimonies and one of the young men preaching.

With temperatures reaching 42°C we needed to take a siesta in the afternoon,

thereby saving our outreach for the early morning and evening. Tuesday to Friday mornings were given over to a letterbox drop in nearby villages with the result that many tracts and invitations to the church were distributed throughout the week.

Wednesday to Friday evenings were spent undertaking a three-day Bible Club in the village playground. Alejandro’s sister spoke in Spanish at these meetings while the Ulster folk helped out with other aspects such as the crafts. Some children from outside the church came along and this greatly encouraged everyone.

Although we were limited by the language barrier, we thoroughly enjoyed sweet fellowship with the folk in the church. Love does not always need words – actions and smiles speak just as eloquently.

We were treated to generous portions of Spanish cuisine in the church as well as at various homes of the congregation and local restaurants. Some of the older saints related something of the extreme difficulties involved in being an evangelical believer when the Roman Catholic Church was much more

dominant than it is today. The fruit of their determination to be witnesses for Jesus Christ, despite all the opposition, is seen in the establishment of a faithful church in Cortijos Nuevos with its various forms of outreach.

The young people loved their time on the outreach and gave the following encouraging reports:

- » ‘We had good fellowship together and with the Spaniards.’
- » ‘We worked together and enjoyed fun and banter, too.’
- » ‘We saw the work firsthand which will always leave a lasting impression upon us.’

I think the young people are mature enough to see that, while missionary work can give rise to some romantic notions, it is also hard work. Perhaps out of our group, God will stir a heart to say, ‘Here am I! Send me!’ and that this obedience will result in a call to labour in Spain or some other part of a vast and needy harvest field. Our labour was certainly not in vain in the Lord. Please pray for fruit from the trip, the Bernabeus, and the work in Spain. ■

✉ Mr Colin Maxwell

# Sending Forth Service for the Hamilton Family



**B**allymena FPC was full to capacity for the Sending Forth of the Hamilton family. The meeting was led by the outgoing chairman of the Kenya Subcommittee, Rev Ian Harris. After being welcomed by Rev A Stewart, Rev J Greer opened in prayer. Mr A Hamilton read the Scriptures and the Moderator, Rev S Murray, brought greetings from Presbytery.

There were a number of presentations made to the family – first of all on behalf of the Ballymena FP church family by Rev A Stewart and then on behalf of the Mission Board by Rev D McMillan. The congregation were greatly blessed by the singing of the Ballymena choir, and it was nice that Mr Benson Osundwa, chairman of the Glory Bible Church's Central Committee in Kenya, was able to send a video message relaying greetings and a welcome to the Hamilton family from the Kenyan congregations.

Rev and Mrs Hamilton responded to the above by declaring how encouraged they were to see so many present for their special night, giving thanks to the LORD for how He had led them to this point in their lives. They requested prayer for themselves as a family as they would leave and start their new life in Kenya. While there were mixed emotions at this move, they both know clearly, they are going in the will of God.

The Mission Board Chairman, Rev C Mercer was the preacher, and he spoke with great power and ability from Acts 16:10 on the words: '...endeavoured to go'. It was a real challenge to hear God's servant speak about the missionary work of our denomination going forward and the Hamiltons endeavouring to go to Kenya in obedience to the call of God.

With members of Presbytery and Mission Board gathering at the front

of the church with the Hamilton family, Rev Hamilton's grandfather, Rev J Beggs, led the meeting in the commissioning prayer, asking for God's blessing upon them as they go to Kenya.

After the singing of the final hymn, Rev J Armstrong closed in prayer, and the entire congregation were able to meet with the family and enjoy refreshments kindly provided by the Ballymena congregation.

It was a most encouraging night to witness the sending forth of not just one missionary, but a missionary family to take forward the cause of Christ in Kenya, especially in the Glory Bible Church. Please keep the family very much in prayer as they settle into life in Kenya, learn the language, and work alongside the Kenyan congregations. ■

✉ **Rev Garth Wilson,**  
*Chairman of Kenya Subcommittee.*

# Sending Forth Service for the McAuley Family

Hebron Free Presbyterian Church, Ballymoney, was filled on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September for the Sending Forth Service for the McAuley family. The congregation included many of the McAuley family, friends, and supporters from their home congregations and across the Province.

Rev Garth Wilson, the minister of Sandown FPC, which was Mrs Rachel McAuley's home church, presided at the service. The minister of Hebron FPC, Rev David Park welcomed the congregation and led in the opening prayer. He also assured the McAuleys of the full support of the Hebron congregation. The Scriptures were read from Genesis 46 by Rev McAuley's father, Mr John McAuley, an elder in the Hebron congregation. Then a message in song was brought by Ethan McKillen and Anna Maternaghan (Ballymena).

Presentations were made to the McAuleys by Mr Samuel Johnston, the Secretary of Hebron FPC, on behalf of the congregation, and by the Mission Board Chairman, Rev Colin Mercer, on behalf of the Board. Rev Mercer also read a welcome message from Miss McAfee and the Carscadden family expressing how much they were looking forward to the new members of the missionary team arriving.

Rev David McAuley responded on behalf of the family outlining the



long journey, over a period of ten years, that had brought them to this point. He also expressed their thanks for the support from their home congregations, the Board, the Uganda Oversight Committee, and the whole denomination. A short video was then shown of their work in Uganda.

The preacher was the Chairman of the Uganda Oversight Committee, Rev David McMillan, who preached from Genesis 46:3&6 on the practical missionary theme, 'Going as a family to live and labour in Africa'. The Moderator, Rev Samuel Murray, brought greetings on behalf of the Presbytery. He then invited the McAuley family, and the ministers and elders who were present to join him in the pulpit, as he offered the commissioning prayer for the McAuleys.

Rev McAuley had been placed in Antrim FPC during his final year in college,

and the minister of the congregation, Rev Paul Thompson, pronounced the closing prayer and benediction. After the service, an excellent supper was served by the ladies in Hebron, and a special time of fellowship was enjoyed by everyone. There was also an opportunity for those present to speak to the McAuleys and wish them God's blessing on their labours.

The McAuleys departed for Uganda on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October and are now settled in their new home and the Lord's work there. We ask all of you to pray earnestly that the Lord will watch over Rev and Mrs McAuley, Eloise, Arthur, and Jude, and use them mightily in Uganda in the winning of souls and the planting of churches. ■

✍ **Rev David McMillan,**  
*Chairman of Uganda Oversight Committee.*

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# Dates For The Diary

## NOVEMBER

4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>

**TANDRAGEE FPC,  
WEEK OF MEETINGS**

*Time:* 8pm each night

*Monday 4<sup>th</sup>*

*Why do we need Revival?*

Rev Roger Higginson

*Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup>*

*Do we really need missionaries?*

Rev Ian Harris

*Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup>*

*Why should a Christian join a church?*

Rev Paul Foster

*Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>*

*The Importance of the Prayer Meeting in the Church*

Rev Andrew Murray

*Friday 8<sup>th</sup>*

*How do we know that God is calling us into full time service?*

Rev Timothy Nelson

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17<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>

**DROMORE FPC,  
BIBLE WEEK**

*Time:* Sunday 7pm, Mon-Fri 8pm

*Theme:* 'The Garments of the High Priest'

*Speaker:* Rev Ron Johnstone

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18<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>

**PORTGLENONE FPC GOSPEL MISSION  
PORTGLENONE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

*Time:* 8pm each night

*Evangelist:* Mr Noel Shields