

FREE PRESBYTERIAN VISION



THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

What Makes Good Church Music?



The Interview: Paul Roberts



Congregation Call: Crossgar



Spotlight on the Schools



Willing to do the Father's Will

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20 NEWS: ORDINATION OF ARMEN THOMASSIAN



22 MISSIONS: 20 Years in Kenya



04 The Interview: Paul Roberts

16 Congregational Call: Crossgar

06 What Makes Good Church Music?

18 Spotlight on the Schools

11 Youth:
Willing to do the Father's Will

20 News: Rev Morrow Retires

12 Foundations:
How Can I Know Salvation?

21 Missionary Updates

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Editorial

Some weeks ago, preparing for my college class, I came across the following words by an unnamed writer. 'We live in a different world than the one our parents knew. As the next generation grows into adulthood, they will face choices and issues unknown to us. Their new territory may include decisions about genetic manipulation, coping with the effects of advancing technology, and rapidly declining moral values.'

He wrote almost forty years ago – prophetic or not?! This is the world in which we live right now, and I expect that our unknown penman, if he is still with us, would acknowledge that the challenges actually go far beyond what he anticipated. These tests and trials impact modern society and culture, and our province, despite its favoured heritage, has no immunity. More and more, we need the discernment of the

men of Issachar, that God-given ability to see things as they really are and to respond aright.

Our anonymous commentator was not finished. He went on to observe that 'each of us as Christians can be assured that God is with us, directing and upholding us in the ever changing experience of life. Though we do not know what is in store for us from day to day, God is never taken by surprise. Along with Joshua, we can draw courage from His promise: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Joshua 1:5).'

Let this assurance reach us – let it console us, and let it embolden us to stand for what is right even if it seems that all the world is against us!

∴ Timothy Nelson
editor@fpvision.org



JESUS CHRIST

THE CHIEF CORNER STONE

When describing His church, one metaphor the Lord uses is that of a

building. An example of this is found in Paul's letter to the Ephesians when he speaks of *"all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord"* (Ephesians 2:21). This building, the church, is comprised of many 'stones' redeemed *"with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"* (1 Peter 1:19). Every one of them is hewn out of the dark quarry of sinful humanity being *"dead in trespasses and sins"* (Ephesians 2:1), *"alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them"* (Ephesians 4:18) and *"without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world"* (Ephesians 2:12).

In coming unto the *"living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house"* (1 Peter 2:4,5). *"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and*

prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:19,20).

In the foundation then of the church, made up of the inspired teaching of the apostles and prophets, it is Jesus Christ who is the chief corner stone. The chief corner stone supports the whole structure. This stone is to the building, what the keystone is to the arch. It gives unity, strength and stability. All the promises meet in Him – they are *"in Him, yea and amen"* (2 Corinthians 1:20). All the precepts rest on His authority and all the saints are united to Him. All our petitions are offered in and through His name. All true believers are one 'in Christ Jesus' and to maintain the unity of the Spirit need to keep their eyes on Him, otherwise discord and disorder result. Whatever doctrines or practices do not correspond with the corner stone, let us cease from them!

Not only is He the chief corner stone, He is also a precious corner stone (Isaiah 28:16). He is precious in every

office He holds, in every promise He makes, in every work He performs. His preciousness is exceedingly great to all

whose sense their nothingness and helplessness in the deep trials of life, when the wounds of opposition, pain and bereavement prompt them to cry out *"lead me to the rock that is higher than I"* (Psalm 61:2).

As the tried stone, He is the sure foundation. Never was a foundation tried as this – tried when He bore all His people's sins and was not found wanting, tried when the law demanded a perfect obedience to its precepts

and was fully kept, and tried when the church can rest on this foundation and the gates of Hell cannot prevail against her. Christ is the stone without which there can be no church for He is *"all, and in all"* (Colossians 3:11).

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∴ **Rev Leslie Curran**, Associate Editor, is the Director of Let the Bible Speak radio ministry in N Ireland, and a regular preacher on its worldwide network of broadcasts.

A portrait of Paul Roberts, a middle-aged man with grey hair, a goatee, and black-rimmed glasses. He is wearing a red, white, and blue plaid shirt. He is positioned in front of a wooden bookshelf filled with books. Some of the visible book spines are in Cyrillic script, including 'ХОН ХЭБЭР', 'ИНЖИЛ', 'АЛКАВАЛ БИЛЭН', and 'БАИБЕЛ'. To the right, there is a book titled 'THE STORY OF ERNE ALLEN AND THE EVERY HOME CRUSADE' and another with 'AM MIL' on the cover. The background is slightly out of focus.

THE INTERVIEW: PAUL ROBERTS

ASK ANY ULSTER EVANGELICAL ABOUT GOSPEL LITERATURE PRODUCTION AND EVERY HOME CRUSADE (EHC) IS SURE TO GET HONOURABLE MENTION. EHC HAS DONE STERLING WORK OVER MANY DECADES, HOME AND ABROAD - NOT LEAST MAKING A TELLING CONTRIBUTION TO OUR OWN 'CONSIDER CHRIST' CAMPAIGN. WHAT MAY NOT BE SO WIDELY KNOWN IS THAT SANDOWN ROAD ELDER PAUL ROBERTS HAS WORKED FOR THE ORGANISATION FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS. THE EDITOR SPOKE WITH PAUL RECENTLY.

TN: Timothy Nelson **PR:** Paul Roberts

TN: Tell us something of your background

PR: Belfast has always been home for me. I was born in the old Templemore Avenue Hospital, now long gone, a forerunner of the Ulster Hospital at Dundonald. My family lived in that area of east Belfast, and I suppose I had a relatively uneventful but happy childhood, cared for by decent, hardworking parents.

TN: Did you attend school locally?

PR: I went first to Avoniel Primary, then to Lisnasharragh Primary after we moved to live in the Clonduff Estate. Afterwards, it was on to Lisnasharragh High, celebrated because of its most famous pupil, the footballer George Best. In all honesty I wasn't a bad student, though I struggled a bit towards the end. But I just wasn't keen – unless it was Art, which I really enjoyed.

TN: What about a church connection?

PR: There wasn't one early on. I have no recollection of being sent or taken to meetings, or to Sunday School, and in that I was no different to the majority of lads I knew in those days.

TN: So how did things change?

PR: I had an aunt and uncle who attended the local Church of the Nazarene congregation, and they started to bring me to services there. I think they may also have attended the old Ravenhill church on occasions. Anyhow, one Sunday, at sixteen years old, I was brought under conviction, and I struggled with it all week, until the next Sunday, when the Lord graciously saved me. From then on, I was immersed in all the meetings and activities at the Nazarene church.

TN: And the workplace beckoned?

PR: Yes, I left school after a short spell in sixth form, and got a job at EHC at the second attempt. Mr Allen, founder of the work, then based in Redcar Street, had once pastored the Nazarene church, and that may have been influential in making the initial contact. At that time, there were just eight employees, now there are twenty-four and numerous other volunteers.

TN: What did your work entail?

PR: I started in the dispatch room, dealing with mail, sending out parcels to correspondents – appropriate enough for the son of a postman! Then I moved to the printing side of the operation. I am still involved in that area of the work, though now more in the finishing department.

TN: Meanwhile your church allegiance soon changed

PR: Yes, there were issues in the Nazarene church with which we weren't happy, and the Lord showed my wife Celia and I that we were to separate from it. After resolving to try other options, we went first to Sandown Road, and we didn't need to look anywhere else, both of us knowing that this was where the Lord wanted us. After more than twenty five years, we have no regrets.

TN: You have been involved in many things in Sandown

PR: We are thankful for what Sandown and its people have given us. God has used many of His saints to help me spiritually – from my Aunt and Uncle and Mr Allen early on, to good friends in the congregation, notably the late Fred Starret, who was such an encouragement to a young Christian finding his way, and from whom I learned so much. Our long-time minister, Rev McIlveen, was always a great help, and his good work is being carried on faithfully by Rev Wilson. And so with such support it has been no struggle to want to give something back. I have always had an interest in children's and youth work, and we have been committed to

that. Celia – who has been a tower of strength – and I have led the Sandown summer camp for the last ten years, privileged to build on the good work of Bobby Moore and Paul Kyle. I was truly honoured to be elected to the eldership in 2008, so the work of God in Sandown is really at the centre of our lives. God has been good. We have proved the truth of verses special to us: Proverbs 3:5-6.

TN: You have never thought of leaving EHC?

PR: I've never had the desire to do so. It's such a privilege to have a little part in printing Scripture and putting it in the hands of untold thousands I'll never meet, at least in this world. I continue to be inspired by the vision of Mr Allen – 'the world is our parish' – and the Lord has showed me that I am to carry on serving Him by means of the door He has opened.

TN: And the work continues to progress

PR: It's amazing to reflect on the changes in technology and output over the last thirty years – and the demand for literature continues unabated. Last year, we produced 75 million pieces of literature and used 1336 tons of paper! We distributed to more than 120 countries, in over 100 languages – it's incredible to think that I was around when we printed in our very first 'foreign' language for distribution in Africa! To God be all the glory!

TN: Thanks for your time, Paul. May God continue to bless your labours!



Fred Starret (left) with Paul (right)

What Makes Good Church **MUSIC?**

INVESTIGATING THE ISSUES:

Blogs, books, posts, positions. A Google search for “glorifying God in our music” yields 1,410,000 items, so it is easy to see that much has been (and is being) written about music in worship; nearly everyone has *something* to say about the topic. Allow me to offer some brief thoughts on this important subject, and the next search will yield 1,410,001!

What is our mission as Christians? Nearly every business, school, church, or organization has a mission statement summarizing its goals. Many include information on how they govern themselves and the process by which decisions are made. The mission statement for believers is found in the answer to the first question in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, “*Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever*”. This reflects the truth of I Corinthians 10:31, “*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*” Those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb will enjoy Him forever, for no man will pluck them out of His hand (cf John 10:28). However, glorifying God in our everyday lives sometimes brings challenges. So, how do we honour Him and glorify His name in music in the worship services of our churches?

We begin by realizing that He is the theme of our song. He alone is worthy. We remind ourselves of who we are in Christ and what we have in Him; we testify to Him and of Him for what He has done in reconciling us to Himself. Songs in Scripture warrant our study for their theme and content. Consider Mary’s response to the news that she would bring forth the One Who would save His people from their sins. She was overwhelmed at God’s goodness to her; her song is filled with

joy and gratitude, with a desire to magnify and exalt the Lord. (Luke 1:46-54) She “is adoring God for being what He is and this is the very essence of Christian worship and of Christian praise.” (Lloyd-Jones) This is a worthy goal for songs we sing and instrumental offerings we provide! Mary’s song provides a good outline to test the strength of what we use in worship. We, like Mary, have reasons to praise Him.


The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to praise the Lord with “*psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*” (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16), and we possess a rich heritage of these forms today. We sing from the Psalter; we love hymns that come from the Reformation (‘A Mighty Fortress Is Our God’) and beyond; and our hymnals include spiritual songs such as “Blessed Assurance.”

We are commanded to “*offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*” (Hebrews 13:15) But what does this *look* like and what does it *sound* like? While we have dozens of references to music in Scripture, tunes have not been preserved. We do, though, have principles that guide us, and we have a rich history of hymnody that provides examples of “*things that are excellent.*” (Philippians 1:10) The challenges come in working through the applications of principles derived from Scripture; that is where discernment is needed.

We are to “*prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.*” (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22) We must examine, analyse, and compare things with understanding and discernment. Good men

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may differ in application. We may get varying opinions from trained musicians, but we must still examine and analyse the music to see that it is worthy in the light of Scripture. Along with the music, we must go further and make sure that our use of a composer's music does not imply an endorsement of unscriptural teaching. God's Word "contains all that is necessary for the faith and practice of the people of God" (Book of Church Order, FPCNA) and the Holy Spirit will guide us to make wise choices – choices that confirm our mission of glorifying God – and allow us to set our musical and spiritual compass toward things that honour His name.

Scripture requires separation unto holiness, and the music we use must reflect the nature of our God. "Tunes and music that identify with worldly environments [i.e., genres such as rock, jazz, rap, Contemporary Christian, etc.] have no place in the worship of God. The consciousness of God's holiness should strongly influence the kind of music brought into His presence to praise Him and to offer the thanksgiving He deserves." (Ibid)

In proving our music, we may be prone to disregard things that are new and cling to things that are old. The date of composition may not be a primary concern for there will be things composed in 2015 that are appropriate and honouring to God while things written many years ago – perhaps even some of our favourites – may be weak theologically and musically. Most congregations sing a variety of tunes: older hymns which have been tested and have risen, like cream, to the top; newer melodies

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which have been wedded to old texts; and pieces by contemporary poets with strong tunes. One that is enjoying immense favour in the United States is "His Robes for Mine" by Chris Anderson. (See www.churchworksmmedia.com)

Music is a natural part of a believer's worship; it is not a 'fill in' until the preaching; it is that "*fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*" (Hebrews 13:15) We are to "*make a joyful noise unto the LORD....come before his presence with singing....Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*" (Psalm 100:1-4)

"Worship is the highest calling of

the believer. It is the centre jewel on the crown of Christian discipleship." (Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible) Therefore, it behoves us to see that all we do in our worship – from the reading of Scripture, to the preaching of the Word, to the music we use – honours and glorifies the One Who alone is worthy to be praised.

May all of our music conform to the mission statement of a believer: glorifying God and enjoying Him forever!

∴ **Ed Dunbar** serves as an elder in Faith Free Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC, USA and is active in the music ministry of that congregation. Dr Dunbar is chairman of the Division of Music at Bob Jones University.

NEW ELDERS FOR BALLYMONEY



Messrs Jonathan McAuley and Philip Moffat have been ordained and installed to the eldership in the Ballymoney congregation. They are pictured with Minister Rev Park, Moderator Rev Greer, other contributors to the service on 8th January, and existing elders.

Photographs courtesy of John Currie Photography

GARVAGH SUNDAY SCHOOL



Grace Lucas, who successfully answered all 107 questions of the Shorter Catechism, received a certificate from Rev Lucas and Sabbath School Superintendent, Mr David Johnston.

Meanwhile, David and his wife Evelyn subsequently retired from Sabbath School work after many years of faithful labour. Both received gifts from Rev Lucas.

TANDRAGEE RETIREMENT

Mr Robert Heak's connection with Tandragee church goes back to its beginnings some 48 years ago. Now after many years service, first on Committee, then on Session, he has stepped down from office on health grounds. Last December Rev S Murray presented Robert with an original painting of the Mourne Mountains in appreciation of his faithfulness. Free Presbyterians in Tandragee wish Robert and his wife Elizabeth the Lord's blessing for the future.



SIXMILECROSS ANNIVERSARY

Sixmilecross congregation marked its fortieth anniversary with special services on Sunday 25th January – forty years to the day from its constitution.

Moderator Rev Greer, who was the first minister of the congregation, brought a challenging and encouraging message, and Stephen Greer contributed in song.

WHITEFIELD COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE

Entrance Examinations for prospective candidates for the Theological Course at the Whitefield College for the year beginning September 2015 will take place at the Whitefield.

Monday 20th April	19:30	English Language
Tuesday 21st April	19.30	English Literature
Wednesday 22nd April	19.30	Literature

Candidates must report to the College by 19.15 and are expected to provide their own writing paper. All candidates should forward the Entrance Examination Fee of £20 (for each subject) before 31 March 2015 to:

WHITEFIELD COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE

117 Banbridge Road, Gilford, CRAIGAVON, Co Armagh, BT63 6DL



FREE PRESBYTERIAN EASTER CONVENTION

**3RD + 6TH
APRIL
2015**

Martyrs' Memorial Free Presbyterian Church

Fri 3rd, 8:00pm

**Focus on Missionary
Work across the World**

Singing: Regional Youth Choir

Reports: Miss J Greer (Uganda)
Mr. R McConnell

Preacher: Rev D DiCanio

Supper will be served after this meeting

Mon 6th, 3:30pm

Report: Miss J Greer (Liberia)

Preacher: Rev J. Greer (Moderator)

Mon 6th, 7:00pm

Report: Miss G Gillespie (Kenya)

Preacher: Rev I Kenny

Singing: Free Presbyterian Choirs

Children's Club available on Monday. Meal may be purchased between (Monday) services.

CHILDREN'S CORNER



The Inverted "Jenny"

On 14th May 1918 William T. Robey walked into a busy post office in downtown Washington DC to buy a 24 cent postage stamp. The US Postal Service had just released this new stamp a few days before. It had a red background with a blue bi-plane in the centre called 'Jenny'. While standing there at the counter both Mr Robey and the clerk noticed something very strange. The entire sheet of stamps had mistakenly been printed with the bi-plane flying upside down. There and then, Mr Robey bought the whole sheet: \$24 for one hundred stamps... quite a sum of money in those days.



Then, in 1959 at an auction, stamp number "77" turned up out of nowhere and was sold for the princely sum of \$6100. But that's not all! It came up for sale again in 1982, this time fetching \$198,000.

Finally, it was sold again at another auction, just a couple of years ago in 2013, for, wait for it, \$500,000!

Boys and girls, dealers and collectors place great worth on seemingly rare and unique things. However, some of them place little value on the most precious thing that we all have: our precious, never-dying soul! The Bible reminds us of the preciousness of our souls when it says, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mark.8:36)

Sadly, many today are careless about their soul's eternal welfare and are very lax about their great need of salvation. Like many of the other stamps on that misprinted sheet, they too, through neglect, will end up being destroyed and lost forever. Don't let that be the case for you. Come to the Saviour today while you still can for, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3)

Within a week Mr Robey sold the sheet to stamp collector Eugene Klein for \$15,000. Klein then sold the sheet on, this time for \$20,000 to another collector called Edward Green. Green decided to lightly number all the stamps in pencil in the bottom corner before selling them on individually, except for a few that he kept for himself.

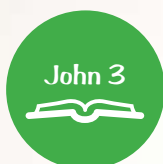
Over the years these rare stamps were passed on and sold to various people. Some were damaged. Others were destroyed. Some were lost and never heard of again.

Compiled by Robert McConnell

What shall it
profit a man if he
gain the whole
world and lose his
own soul?
Mark 8 v 36

Quiz:

The quiz this time is very simple. Sometimes various lessons in the Bible are repeated. In this issue we quoted Mark 8:36, but that truth is also repeated elsewhere in the New Testament. Read the Bible for yourself: in which of the following is this truth found?



Answer:

PRIZES!

Are you 12 or under? Send your answer, name, address and church to:

Rev. Stephen Pollock

Email: answer@fpvision.org

15 Fernagreevagh Road, Loughgall,
Armagh, BT61 8PN

£5 WINNERS LAST TIME:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| » Chloe Bowman
(Magherafelt) | » Rachel McQueen
(Cookstown) |
| » Emma Bunting
(Stranraer) | » Rebecca Dick
(Crossgar) |
| » Daniel Edwards
(Lisburn) | » Hannah Johnston
(Coragarry) |
| » Rose Ellen Hutter
(Merthyr Tydfil) | » Olivia Smyth
(Coleraine) |

WILLING TO DO THE FATHER'S WILL

The strength of the Christian gospel lies in the truth that the work of salvation is done for us, not by us. Other religions consistently teach that to know God we must 'do.' The Gospel teaches that we know God because of what He has done! The words of Christ on the cross manifest that truth: 'It is finished.' (John 19:30) But what is it that is 'finished?'

The answer to that question is given by John in various texts which refer to Christ doing the will of His Father. "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (John 4:34) A key feature of the Lord's condescension to be our Saviour was to submit Himself, as the incarnate God-man, to the Father's will. Eternally, the Son of God consented to the sovereign will of the Father to redeem a people unto Himself. Coming into this world, the eternal Son takes to Himself our nature, 'a true human body and reasonable human soul'. As incarnate Deity, we read of the Saviour agreeing to and delighting in the Father's will. Step by step on the road to the cross we see the Lord consenting to do the Father's bidding. As Emmanuel, the eternal Son, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, humbles Himself, taking a place of submission. The Father determines the way in which sinners can be saved and the Son willingly performs the required task.

This is prophesied in Psalm 40 "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (v8 cf Hebrews 10) This was realised in the Lord's entire life. 'He was obedient to death, even the death of the cross.' (Philippians 2:8)

Christ does the Father's will in His perfect obedience to the Law of the Father. "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." (John 8:29) He fulfils all righteousness: He does all and only that which is righteous. He fulfils the precepts of the Law. He provides the obedience we need, but cannot perform, to be accepted by God. He also does the Father's will in paying the penalty of the Law. In the Garden we see the Saviour consenting to drink the cup of God's wrath in His death. "He... prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." (Matthew 26:42) "Then said

Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11) Thus, on the cross He cries: 'Finished!'

Christ came willingly, from heaven, sent of God, to live the life that we cannot live, and to die the death that we deserve. This is the core of the gospel. This is the only gospel worth believing and proclaiming to all the world.

*"Upon a Life I have not lived,
Upon a Death I did not die,
Another's Life; Another's Death,
I stake my whole eternity."*

Why did He come? He came to do everything that the Father required for the salvation of sinners.

FROM THE OLD TO THE YOUNG

"If the Lord [offers] you the gift of righteousness through Jesus Christ, do not say you cannot receive it; ...the question is, Are you in need of it? Are you not guilty and is not a pardon suitable for the guilty? Receive it as a grace."

- From the Works of Robert Trail, Volume IV, Sermon 1 on Galatians 2 v 21



FOUNDATIONS

THINGS YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW

HOW CAN I KNOW SALVATION?

Last issue we commenced a series of articles seeking to lay out some foundational truths to help you know where you stand in the world. We began with the fact that young people need to know that there is such a thing as truth and that truth is to be found in the Word of God.

This time, Rev. Ryan McKee (Magherafelt) addresses the question: How can I know salvation?

What do you consider to be the most important matter in your life right now – education, relationships, career, or sporting development? However you answer, God's Word declares that the need of salvation is the most important matter in your life.

WHAT IS SALVATION?

At the commencement of the New Testament, in Matthew 1:21, we read of the name of God's Son, Jesus, and of the purpose of His coming into the world: *'He shall save His people from their sin.'* Later, in Matthew 18:11, Christ Himself taught that, *'the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.'* From these two verses we learn that as sinners we are in danger and we are lost.

The word *'save'*, used in both verses, is an interesting one. It carries the idea of safety. Thus we could say in saving His people, Jesus is delivering them and protecting them from danger. That danger is directly connected to our sinful condition. By birth we have a sinful nature.

We are born sinners. Some people have tried to explain sin as the consequence of the society in which we live. Yet the Bible declares that we are born in sin. Remember the example of Cain, the first child born into the world. He was born into a world without evil literature, street gangs, nightclubs or immoral television programmes, yet he became a murderer! We cannot blame our sinfulness on our society or family or circumstances in life. We are sinful because we have been born as sinners. And the record of our lives is a sinful one. Because of our sinful nature and record we face God's punishment for sin - eternal separation and torment in hell. As God is holy and just He must punish sin. He cannot overlook or excuse sin. He must see it dealt with in His perfect judgement.

We can now see the danger sinners are in: facing God's judgement and punishment. Many are unconcerned about this danger. Some don't believe the Bible and live as if there will be no punishment for sin. Others know what God's Word says but don't seem to care. The Lord says in

Deuteronomy 32:29, *'O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!'*

Jesus not only saves from sin's punishment but also from sin's power. When a person is saved then the Lord gives him strength to say no to sin and to live in a way that brings glory to Him. That makes a difference in his life. No longer does he happily sin and live by his own rules. He joyfully lives by God's rules and instruction. We are not just saved to die well, we are also saved to live well! That is the evidence that we are truly saved. There is a change in our lives. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:17, *'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.'*

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

The Word of God reveals something true of each saved person – the ability to testify to faith in Jesus Christ and repentance towards God.

Faith is trusting in the Word of God and upon the Son of God. By faith, a sinner believes that the Lord Jesus lived a perfect life and gave Himself willingly to die upon the cross for him as his substitute. The sinner confesses that the Saviour bore the punishment that he deserves, and in doing so satisfied God's anger against his sin. He believes that Christ paid the debt of his sin by the shedding of His blood, His resurrection testifying that His work is accepted by

the Father. When the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas what he needed to do to be saved, they told him, *'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'* (Acts 16:31)

John Calvin once wrote, *'Faith embraces Christ, as offered to us by the Father.'* Faith receives the Christ offered in the Gospel. Some believe in a 'god' that saves them from hell but isn't concerned with how they live before Him.

That is not the God of Scripture. True faith recognises that man is guilty in his sin, that Christ alone can save him from that sin, and that the Lord will change his life, leading and guiding him in truth and holiness.

Repentance is a turning away from sin, from the life that we have lived in sin, and the way we have previously thought about God. Preachers often quote the following lines:

"Repentance is to leave behind, The sins we loved before, And show that we in earnest grieve, By doing so no more."

Psalms 51 gives us a clear demonstration of repentance. This passage shows that sin is a burden to David; that his sin is against God; that there is no joy in his

sin; and that before he could have a clean heart and a right spirit, he had to turn away from his sin and ask God to deal with it.

Some want to be saved from hell but not from their sin. Paul essentially preached that faith and repentance go hand in hand (Acts 20:21). True faith will always be accompanied by repentance. This has always been the message of Scripture. God's way of salvation has not changed.

PERHAPS YOU KNOW ABOUT SALVATION: YOU'VE HEARD IT PREACHED MANY TIMES. PERHAPS YOU'VE SEEN THE REALITY OF IT IN THE LIVES OF FRIENDS AND RELATIVES, BUT AS OF THIS MOMENT YOU ARE STILL NOT SAVED.

Perhaps you know about salvation; you've heard it preached many times. Perhaps you've seen the reality of it in the lives of friends and relatives, but as of this moment you are still not saved.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW YOU ARE SAVED TODAY?

The Bible teaches us that we do not know when we will die and therefore it is important that we are prepared to meet God. Proverbs 27:1: *"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."* John 3:16 reminds us that *"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"*. Turn from your sin and come to Christ in faith today!



RUGBY WORLD CUP 2015

OUTREACH TEAM

Some young people have already committed to one of the two outreaches, however there are still places for Cardiff (18th - 24th September) and London (2nd - 8th October). These also offer good opportunities for fellowship with the local churches. The Mainland Commission is in full support of this venture and is contributing to the cost for each person. If you are interested contact Jonathan Smith:

Email: jonnysmith_510@hotmail.co.uk
Mob: 07533035923.

MAINLAND OUTREACH

STRANRAER

4th - 10th July

Cost £245

Age: 18+ (10 places)

BRISTOL

18th - 25th July

Cost £245

Age: 18+ (10 places)

CHILDREN'S OUTREACHES

LARNE

10th - 14th

August 2015

Cost: £160

Age: 16+

KESH

6th - 10th

July 2015

Cost: £160

Age: 16+

Please go to
fpcyouth.org
for further
details and
to download
application
forms

2015 SPRING RALLIES

FRIDAY 13TH MARCH

8:00PM

RASHARKIN

(North West / North Antrim / South Antrim)

Speaker: Rev. K McLeod

ENNISKILLEN

(The West)

Speaker: Rev. J Gray

PORTADOWN

(South West / Mid Ulster)

Speaker: Rev. D Abernethy

MONEYSLANE

(South Down / Mid Down)

Speaker: Rev. W McDermott

NEWTOWNABBEY

(Belfast / North Down)

Speaker: Rev. B McClung

YOUTH COUNCIL EVENTS

2015 EVANGELISM TRAINING WEEKEND

20th - 22nd March, Faith Mission Centre, Portadown

Cost: £65

OTHER EVENTS

MARTYRS' MEMORIAL YOUTH CAMP

FAITH MISSION CENTRE,
DURRAGH, CO LAOIS

23rd - 27th August

Cost: £135 - £145 (inclusive)

Enquiries/Applications: M. Bannatyne

028 9508 9065 or 079 8922 5602

A WORD TO WOMEN

“YEA, A SWORD SHALL PIERCE THY OWN SOUL ALSO.”

(LUKE 2:35)

Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus, was a remarkable woman. Her exaltation by the Roman Catholic Church may lie behind our failure to recognise the godly character of Mary. But she is worthy of our attention and there is much in her life that we would do well to imitate.

Mary was an ordinary Jewish girl, engaged to a carpenter called Joseph. She was chosen by the Lord to be the vessel that would enable the incarnation of the Son of God. While not understanding how such a thing could be, she accepted the Lord's will, saying “be it unto me according to thy word”.

In accepting God's will for her life, Mary exposed herself to much heartache and yet also a great reward. Elisabeth rightly deemed Mary ‘blessed among women’, and the mother ‘of my Lord’. Mary did not regard herself as sinless, but rejoiced in ‘God my Saviour’. When the wise men came with gifts to the infant Jesus, it was Him they worshipped and not Mary.

Mary, then, was a woman with feelings just like us. What joys she experienced watching the child Jesus grow “in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man”. However Mary had to remember that He was no ordinary child and even at twelve years old, He was working to fulfil His Heavenly Father's will. Mary humbly submitted to Christ throughout her life. At the wedding at Cana, she told the servants, “Whatsoever He (Jesus) saith unto you, do it.” Do we have the same meek and submissive spirit? Are we prepared for the will of God, whatever the cost?

Mary sat under the preaching of Christ often. She also accepted His gentle rebuke when she tried to gain privilege with Him. It would have been easy for her to think that she deserved a greater share of Christ's attention. But in Christ there is, ‘neither

male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.’ Let us guard against self-exaltation.

The most difficult time in Mary's life was at the cross. Mary was told by Simeon, when she brought the infant Christ to the temple, that a sword would pierce her heart. Simeon prophesied about the death of the Lord Jesus Christ as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. We can only wonder how much Mary understood of how Christ would give Himself as an offering to appease Divine justice. We read of her keeping ‘these sayings in her heart.’ In the midst of trials we may feel overwhelmed, but looking back we see the hand of God at work.

MARY DID
NOT FORSAKE HER
SON AND SAVIOUR.
SHE WAS AMONG THE
WOMEN WHO CAME
TO WITNESS THE
CRUCIFIXION.

Mary did not forsake her son and Saviour. She was among the women who came to witness the crucifixion. How helpless and broken hearted she must have felt! The horror and cruelty of crucifixion was the sword that pierced

Mary's soul. It is impossible to fathom the suffering of Jesus on the cross, and the cry from Mary's heart could have been, ‘Why?’ Life can bring us perplexing and painful experiences, but remember, God is always in control. Without the cross there would have been no salvation for Mary or for us.

Our final glimpse of Mary finds her with the disciples in the upper room. Mary was one of those who met ‘with one accord in prayer and supplication.’ All the hard things have been made plain and she is content to join with her fellow believers, praying for the power of the Holy Spirit to descend and Christ's kingdom to be extended. She is truly an example to us all!

¶ **Olive Maxwell** lived and worked for over twenty years in the city of Cork. She and husband Colin continue to serve with the Mission Board focusing primarily on the Republic of Ireland.

CONGREGATION CALL: CROSSGAR

Crossgar Free Presbyterian Church came into being on 17th March 1951 out of evangelistic fervour, which brought it into conflict with the liberal agenda gaining ground in many denominations. Down Presbytery ruled that a mission in which the young Rev Ian Paisley was to be the evangelist could not go ahead in Lissara Presbyterian Church Hall. Evangelicals could not believe that the Presbytery would ban a gospel mission in their own hall. For two of the elders, Hugh James Adams and George K. Gibson, the highhandedness of the Presbytery was too much. They refused to cancel the gospel campaign. For this they were suspended. That same evening, those who were taking part in a march of witness were locked out of the hall in torrential rain. The Mission, however, went on in Killyleagh Street Mission Hall. 94 people professed faith in Christ.

In the aftermath, extensive times of prayer were held in Crossgar and in Ravenhill. Eventually the decision to form a new Presbyterian denomination was adopted by five of the seven elders of Lissara, together with all of the Sunday School teachers and some 60 of the congregation.

At the constitution service for the new congregation on 17th March 1951, a temporary minister, Rev. George Stears (Presbyterian Church of South America), was installed. He stayed until 1953 when he returned as a missionary to Brazil. In June 1953 Rev. Sydney Lince of Emmanuel Free Church in Sunderland became the first full time minister. During his tenure the main part of the present church building was erected and opened on 16th March 1957. From 1963 to 1987 Rev Cecil Menary had a long and

fruitful ministry. Rev Fred Greenfield served from 1989 to 2002, and the present minister Rev. Gordon Dane was installed on 17th March 2003.

Crossgar Free Presbyterian Church, from its beginning, has sought to emphasise that it came into being for the sake of the gospel. Our motto is, *"But we preach Christ crucified."* Our aim is to present Christ as Saviour to a fallen world, and to build up believers in their most holy faith.

The church in Crossgar has always had a wider vision and supports missionaries across the world. For many years it has been involved in sending out gospel literature to French speaking African countries. The Children's meeting and Youth Fellowship sponsor an African child in association with FAME – Kyalo Muli is a young Kenyan whose mother died in 2004 and whose father has disappeared. The Ladies Fellowship is raising money to help with the education of Isaac.

The Crossgar children and youth meetings have around 130 members on the roll. They meet in three groups every Wednesday night. There is also an annual Holiday Bible Club with around 100 in attendance. With the number of young people to be catered for, the church is currently in the process of planning a new church hall. An extension to the 1957 building with a gallery was opened in 1997, providing some youth facilities, but the need has been felt for a purpose built hall. It is hoped that progress can be made on this in the near future.

There is constant outreach into the community. In recent years the Crossgar Church has been involved in joint missions with other local congregations. A very blessed gospel campaign was held in Lisbane in 2007 on land owned by our late Clerk of Session Roy Moore in conjunction with Ballygowan, Comber and Newtownards congregations. Rev William McCrea was the evangelist and many precious souls were saved and backsliders were restored. Other joint missions have been held in Saintfield in 2009 with Ballygowan congregation, in

Moneyreagh in 2010 with Ballygowan, Comber and Carryduff congregations, and in 2013 in Killinchy with Ballygowan and Comber, the ministers of the three congregations as evangelists. In the autumn of 2013 we had our own outreach mission in Kilmore Orange Hall and in the meantime there have been a number of missions in the Church building. We rejoice in

souls that have been saved in these gospel efforts. Later this year we hope to have a Harvest mission with Rev Roger Higginson.

The Youth Fellowship has organised sports for the young people of the community and this has enabled them to get to know some who would not normally come to church. At the end of the evening there is always a gospel message and food.

In addition to regular door to door ministry for our 'Family and Friends' meetings, in which an evangelistic newsletter called "The Challenge" is distributed, the congregation has an increasing burden for the town

THE CHURCH
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SUPPORTS
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ACROSS THE
WORLD.



Crossgar Session & Committee

of Downpatrick. It has provided and delivered copies of the booklet “No Longer Hoping” – the testimony of Dick Keogh from Tipperary – to all homes in the town. Church member Jonny Rice has written and produced a very colourful and useful little booklet called “The Six Days of Creation’. The Church hopes to distribute these free of charge around Crossgar and surrounding areas in the future. Previously the testimony of the late Billy Alexander was produced in booklet form and used in door-to-door evangelism. The church also broadcasts its sermons on www.sermonaudio.com. For the last two years the church has been able to take part in the new Christmas fair

held in Crossgar, offering free tea and shortbread as well as packs of gospel literature.

But evangelistic effort without power from God will not produce anything lasting. In addition to the Thursday night prayer meeting there is a monthly men’s late night prayer meeting as well as Sunday School teachers’ prayer meetings and other special seasons of prayer. At the late night prayer meetings, emphasis has been laid on concerted and united prayer as a prelude to revival.

For many years the congregation has held an annual Foundations

Conference during the week in which the 17th March occurs. This has been a precious time of gathering around, and learning from, God’s Word. This year Rev Timothy Nelson will be the guest preacher.

Christ instructed His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and we want to discharge this responsibility in our own area. Crossgar congregation is open and welcoming, gathered to worship God as the Bible directs, and reaching out to meet the needs of the people around us.

⋮ Rev Gordon Dane

SPOTLIGHT ON THE SCHOOLS

A Presbytery Education Board Feature



BALLYMONEY

The annual Harvest Service



School Prize-giving



KILSKEERY

School Prize-giving



Matthew Darragh with his mother
- both spent their entire school
career at Kilskeery



BANGOR

Key stage 2 & 3 pupils



Pre-school pupils with Miss Foster



MOURNE

A visit from Mr Noel Shields



Distributing gifts to shut-ins



NEWTOWNABBEY

New year 1 pupils, September 2014



Prizewinners, October 2014



PORTADOWN

Harvest Service



Joint excursion with Clogher Valley school



Joint excursion with Clogher Valley school

ORDINATION OF ARMEN THOMASSIAN

Friday 16th January witnessed the ordination of licentiate Armen Thomassian in his home church, Ballymoney, prior to his installation in Calgary, BC, Canada, this month. The service included contributions from minister Rev Park, Revs McCammon, Martin, Dennison, Stewart, Brown, A Cairns, G Wilson, Moderator Rev Greer and local Clerk of Session Mr N Hanna. Farewell services were held on the following Lord's Day, and Armen, Melanie and their children departed for Canada the next Wednesday.

Our picture, courtesy of John Currie Photography, shows Armen with participants at the ordination service.



REV MORROW RETIRES



Rev John Morrow has retired from the pastorate, his most recent charge being in Omagh, Co Tyrone. Clerk of Session David Aiken paid tribute to over sixteen years of faithful ministry, and presentations were made to

Rev and Mrs Morrow, at a special service on 16th January. Mr Morrow was joined by many of his ministerial colleagues, and an appropriate message was brought by former Moderator Rev R Johnstone.

MISSIONARY VISION

JOYCE WALSH: UPDATE

It continues to be my privilege to bring the Word of God to many boys and girls across the province. During the autumn and winter months I conduct numerous 'After-School Bible Clubs'. Most of these are held in schools. We thank the Lord for these open doors, and for the help and support of teaching staff. Attendance varies from place to place. In some venues, I have been able to hold two meetings each day. Many of the children who come do not attend any Sunday School or children's meeting, so we seek to encourage the local church to make contact with them. In addition,

there are the ongoing opportunities to speak at weekly children's meetings and school assemblies.

The summer months enable us to reach the children with the gospel through Holiday Bible Clubs, Outdoor Meetings and Camp Ministry. These meetings bring us into contact with many children who do not attend weekly meetings in their area. The Youth Council outreach programme has provided opportunity for the young people of our denomination to become involved in Children's ministry. Each year, a team of young people joins me

for a week of outdoor meetings. It has been most encouraging to see these young people contribute, and then go back to their churches and become involved in the work there. The 2015 Youth Council outreach will be in Kesh – details on the web site. I would encourage young people to pray about joining us for the week. And, of course, I value the prayerful and practical support of you all.

Thank you!

✚✚ Joyce Walsh

NEWS FROM 'DOWN UNDER'



It is almost four months since I arrived in Port Lincoln. How quickly time passes! There are encouraging attendances at the Lord's Day services here and at Lock. I have appreciated the welcome, help and support of both congregations. I preach at two Sunday services in Port Lincoln

and I make an afternoon return trip to Lock for the service there. There are midweek prayer meetings in each church as well.

We are approaching the end of the school holidays and youth organization 'Awana' will be recommencing. We are

also endeavouring to start a Sunday school and a monthly youth work in Port Lincoln. Please pray that the Lord will help, blessing His Word as it is proclaimed to the younger generation.

✚✚ Andrew Fitton

20 YEARS IN KENYA

GILLIAN GILLESPIE



Gillian teaching at camp



5 Day Club, Nyaporo



Gillian & Joseph in Bible Study



Missionary Team 2014

It is almost 20 years since I left Ulster to serve in Kenya. Many changes have taken place in my adopted country – more vehicles on the roads, motorbike taxis everywhere, supermarket chains opening in many “up country” towns, university satellite campuses all over the country – the list goes on and on!

The Bible Christian Faith Church (BCFC), with which I labour, has increased in size. New buildings have been erected, and new areas opened up for the preaching of the gospel. More men have joined the pastorate, ‘but what are they among so many?’ Pray with us that God will call others to ‘make up the hedge and stand in the gap’.

When I first arrived in Kenya I believed that I would see thousands of souls

come to Christ, but reality is another story, and it is a hard lesson to learn. In outreach down in the Kachaliba area during my early years, I was witnessing to an elderly lady about our Lord Jesus, when she interrupted and wanted to know if Jesus lived in Kapenguria! She didn’t know who He was – that just broke my heart!

Judith who worked with me in the Nursery Schools of BCFC always laughs and reminds me of my most quoted sentence when I was learning the language: “Please speak slowly”, said in Swahili, to which everyone then responded, “I said”, spoken very slowly, and then carried on like a hare after a rabbit and I still didn’t get what they were saying! But God gave grace and help and always had someone near at hand to translate for me.

5 Day Clubs amongst the children in various BCFC congregations have given me the opportunity of teaching the little lambs. The more proficient I became in the language the more I enjoyed teaching the children. I have had adults come up and remind me of lessons I taught back then.

Looking back I realise that time has passed very quickly. Teens I taught during my early years in West Pokot are now attending the ladies camps and sending their children to teen camp!

God has been good! Like Samuel of old I can say, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us (1 Samuel 7:12). Thank you so much for your prayerful and practical support over all these years!

LATEST FROM LIBERIA



Martin Gbahn, manager of the FPCNA Bookstore outside Monrovia, said on Jan 21 that even though Ebola is still present in Liberia, residents in the Paynesville area have seen fewer cases. "I still see Red Cross [Ebola Response] vehicles passing in town," Mr. Gbahn said, "and they picked up a body yesterday near my home at the Police Academy community behind the bookstore."

Mr. Gbahn also reported that government officials have stopped cremating the bodies of victims because neighbours were complaining of the burning smell and the sound of explosions. "Now they're burying all Ebola bodies in government property on Marshall Highway near the mission compound," Mr. Gbahn said.

The pastors of the three mission churches have not reported any recent illnesses in the FPCNA congregations, but they still covet prayer.

Schools re-opened nationwide on February 2 after a six-month emergency closure, but students will still be required to have their temperature taken and hands washed daily before entering.

Joanne Greer

ANNIVERSARY DINNER



MISSION BOARD & MISSIONARY COUNCIL

Invite you to attend a

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY DINNER & EVENING OF FELLOWSHIP

in

TANDRAGEE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HALL

on

FRIDAY 17TH APRIL 2015, 7PM

To Mark 20 Years of Missionary Service of Miss Gillian Gillespie in Kenya

Price: £17.50 per person
Children (under 12) £7

Full Menu and Booking Form can be downloaded from www.fpcmission.org

For further information please phone
Rev. Ian Harris: 028 4376 8040

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DATES FOR THE DIARY

MARCH

1st-15th PORTGLENONE, GOSPEL MISSION

Time: Sunday, 7.00pm
Monday – Friday at 8.00
Speaker: Rev D Stewart

1st-15th MONEYREAGH ORANGE HALL, GOSPEL MISSION

Time: Sunday, 3.30pm
Monday – Friday, 8.00pm
Speakers: Revs T Murray & A Smylie

8th-13th MARKETHILL, BIBLE WEEK

Time: Sunday, 7.00pm
Monday – Friday, 8.00pm
Speakers: Rev D Priestley

8th-13th MOURNE, BIBLE WEEK

Time: Sunday, 7.00pm
Monday – Friday, 8.00pm
Speaker: Rev R Cranston

13th-15th AGHALEE, BIBLE CONFERENCE

Time: Friday & Saturday, 7.30pm
Sunday, 11.30 & 6.30pm
Speakers: Revs S Pollock, A Patterson,
P Fitzsimmons, G Middleton

14th-15th NEWTOWNABBEY, SOUL WINNERS' CONVENTION

Time: Saturday, 7.30pm
Sunday, 11.30 & 7.00pm
Speakers: Revs J Creane, R Cranston

15th-20th CROSSGAR, FOUNDATIONS BIBLE CONFERENCE

Time: Sunday, 7.00pm
Monday - Friday, 8.00pm
Speaker: Rev T Nelson
Theme: The Holy Spirit

23rd-27th ANNALONG, BIBLE WEEK

Time: Monday – Friday, 8.00pm
Speaker: Rev R Johnstone
Theme: The High Priest's Garments

APRIL

4th RASHARKIN, ANNUAL EASTER RALLY

Time: Saturday, 7.30pm
Speakers: Miss G Gillespie, Rev D DiCanio

12th-14th BALLYMAGERNEY, SPRING CONFERENCE

Time: Sunday, 11.00am & 6.00pm
Monday & Tuesday, 8.00pm
Speaker: Rev T Nelson

12th-26th SANDOWN ROAD, GOSPEL MISSION

Time: Sundays, 7.00pm
Monday - Friday, 8.00pm
Speaker: Rev R Higginson

17th MONEYSLANE YOUTH PRAISE SERVICE

Time: Friday, 8.00pm
Speaker: Rev R McKee
Singers: P Irwin, Mitchell Family
Magherafelt Youth Choir

26th-3rd BANGOR, GOSPEL WEEK

Time: Sundays, 7.00pm
Monday - Friday, 8.00pm
Speaker: Rev J Woods

MAY

2nd-4th LIVERPOOL, ANNUAL BIBLE CONVENTION

Speaker: Dr A Cairns
Details: Rev C Stripp, 0151 5239201

15th LISBURN, YOUTH PRAISE SERVICE

Time: Friday, 8.00pm
Speaker: Rev. Marcus Lecky
Singers: The Greer Brothers
Marcus & Cherith

Supper served after the service.