

Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

Loneliness

How essential is the fellowship of the church for our well-being. There is such benefit and blessing in weekly seasons of worship and fellowship with God's people.

Preaching Christ

Retirement of Rev J Hanna



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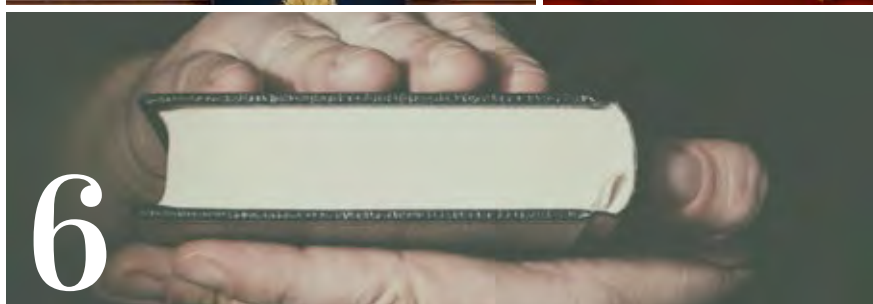
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“It is vital that we preach Christ. We must never imagine that the great truths of the gospel are so well known and understood that they may safely be left unstated.”

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Editorial

The Ordinary Means of Grace

A controversy on the benefit of weekly sermons once raged in the letter section of a popular newspaper. For weeks, readers submitted their thoughts with varying degrees of intensity. While some argued in favour of weekly sermons, the majority of correspondents claimed that they were ineffective and therefore unimportant. One writer robustly claimed that, as he could not remember them from one week to the next, they were of no real value. The controversy continued until an elderly gentleman penned his thoughts. He said something like this, “I have been married for over forty years; and, during that time my wife has made me a meal every night. Some I liked better than others. Some were better presented than others; and though I do not remember all the ingredients, each meal was important, and I would not be here without them.”

The point he made was clear and has strong spiritual application. Just as regular mealtimes are important for a healthy physical life, so the ordinary means of grace are vital for a strong and vibrant Christian life. In Acts 2 the new converts continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers, and were quickly characterised with spiritual maturity. It will be expected that a believer who prayerfully sits under a faithful Christ-centred ministry each week and who is purposeful in private communion with God will likewise prosper.

However, there is a grave danger, in an age of religious fads, that the Christian can lose sight of the ordinary means of grace. The desire for something novel can result in a disdain for the ordinary. The believer can begin to feel that the regular means of grace are insufficient. However, let us remember that Christ has ordained these things for our benefit and blessing. We must not turn away from them, for turning away is a sure way to spiritual weakness. A proper use of the ordinary means of grace will result in a vibrant, effective, contented and Christ-honouring spiritual life. ■

✉ **Editor**

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Desires for 2019



Iwonder, what would you love to achieve this year? While many might like to be fitter or to be better organised, would you love to be set-apart more and more unto God; to grow in your knowledge of Him; and to increase in your likeness to Him? If so, be encouraged, it is possible!

In 1 Chronicles 4:9 we read of a man called Jabez of whom it is said, “Jabez was more honourable than his brethren.” To be honourable is to be worthy of honour. Honouring those in authority involves obeying, imitating and treasuring them (Ephesians 6:1, Philippians 3:17 and Matthew 15:4). If Jabez was a person worthy of honour, his counsel must have been loving, selfless, and Christ-honouring. He must have displayed a Christ-like character of gentleness, goodness and meekness and he must have brought great glory to God and great good to men. Is this a testimony you would like to have? Be encouraged, it is possible.

Not only was Jabez honourable but he was also, “more honourable than his brethren.” Jabez actually excelled in honour above other honourable men. He was determined to glorify his Saviour in his life. He focused his attention on this. He was dedicated to it. What an example and encouragement Jabez is. He was born in sin and shapen in iniquity like you and me but God saved him and supernaturally set him apart unto Himself. Do you want God to do

the same to you? If so, be encouraged, God can, for He changes not (Malachi 3:6).

What was the secret to Jabez’s life? While Jabez was an honourable man, he was also a prayerful man and in 1 Chronicles 4:10 we are given an example of one of his prayers. He called on the God of Israel, saying, “Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me.”

Jabez prayed that he would inherit the full possession of the Promised Land; and while this would involve driving out his Canaanite enemies, he knew God was there to keep His promise, provide him with strength and protect him from harm. He knew this because of God’s covenant. In his prayer he said, “Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed.” This phrase is taken from the Lord’s word to Abraham in Genesis 22:17 where the LORD promised, “In blessing I will bless thee”. What was the blessing God promised Abraham? It was the Messiah, Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:16). Jabez knew God’s ancient promise, “In Christ I will bless thee.”

2019 is a year of opportunity and possibilities. Will you make the most of it and earnestly cry to the LORD, “Oh that thou wouldst bless me in Christ and cause mine enemies of the flesh, world and devil to be driven back so I may know, love and reveal thee! Make me honourable for thy glory and for the good of men”. ■

✍ **Rev Paul Foster,**
Tyndale Free Presbyterian Church,
Belfast.

“What an example and encouragement Jabez is. He was born in sin and shapen in iniquity like you and me but God saved him and supernaturally set him apart unto Himself.”



Loneliness

In the Song of Songs, Solomon speaks of ‘shadows’ on the believer’s pathway to his heavenly home. These are the events or personal circumstances that have dimmed our view of the Sun of Righteousness. In reality, the picture of the Christian life is not one of sunshine all the way. There is a mixture of light and shadow. Sometimes ‘the children of light’ (1Thessalonians 5:5) are constrained to lament with Job: “When I waited for light, there came darkness...I went mourning without the sun” (Job 30:26,28). No saint of God traverses all of the way to Zion in company. There are places on the journey where the pilgrim walks a lonely path.

On your journey you may be entering into or are already under a dark shadow that has brought apprehension and fear. Whatever the providence that has befallen you, the outcome is a sense of friendlessness and loneliness. It is the very experience that finds expression in the words of the Psalmist: “I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top” (Psalm 102:7). No age group is exempt. A recent survey revealed higher levels of loneliness in the 16 to 24-year-olds compared to the over 75s.

What is loneliness? Is it not that feeling of being ‘cut off’? It is feeling estranged from companionship and fellowship,

“ *What is loneliness? Is it not that feeling of being ‘cut off’? It is feeling estranged from companionship and fellowship, with the thought of no longer being able to contribute anything of value to self or to others.* ”

with the thought of no longer being able to contribute anything of value to self or to others. In the midst of gloominess of spirit and a self-reflective mood you feel you are either unnoticed or unneeded, even unloved. That feeling of desertion, even abandonment, is intense. There is a struggle within and even a sense of discouragement that a once loved role is no longer performed and the enjoyable and best parts of life are only memories. Alas, such heart emotions now control your mood as they did David when he asked: “How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?” (Psalm 13:2). He was all day devising schemes by which he might escape from his situation. He was unable to think his way out of his trial because his thinking was confused by his feelings. He allowed his feelings to do his thinking for him. Defeat always seemed to be staring him in the face and it was only a question of how long that defeat would last, “How long shall mine enemy triumph over me?” (Psalm 13:2). He felt he had no resources left within himself to draw upon. He was in a lonely place, fittingly described by the words, “I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert” (Psalm 102:6).

Has your loneliness come during or after a time of lingering illness, a deep grief with which the heart is breaking, a dark valley that brought moral, spiritual and emotional turmoil, or some other severe trial of deep discouragement and dispiriting disappointment? You may be tempted to think you are alone in your experience but again you share that of the Psalmist, who said, “Why go I mourning?” (Psalm 42:9; 43:2). His heart was heavy being so much affected by everything. He then challenged himself: “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?” (Psalm 42:5,11; 43:5) and began a time of reflection. Circumstances had made it impossible to gather with the worshippers at Jerusalem. In the midst of the isolation and daily opposition (Psalm 42:10) that he faced, he recognised there was encouragement and companionship in the gatherings of the saints.

How essential is the fellowship of the church for our well-being. There is such benefit and blessing in weekly seasons

of worship and fellowship with God’s people. The soul is nourished and the whole person enriched. After all, we are living persons made for personal relationships with one another and with the God who made us in His image. Consider the personal fellowship our Saviour sought in Gethsemane.

Remember there is a perfect identity of Christ’s human nature with ours. His human nature, apart from sin, is in the same mould as ours and he had sympathies and yearnings for fellowship. In His hour of soul anguish and sorrow in the garden He appealed to the sympathy of His disciples in the words: “Tarry ye here and watch with me” (Matthew 26:38). Here is the nature of the sympathy and fellowship which He sought - ‘watch with me’. In such an hour

“The heart of Christ is a human and tender heart; and as it is your privilege to lean on His arm for support, it is also your privilege and duty to lean upon His heart for sympathy.”

He felt the need of human sympathy and wanted the physical presence of His disciples. To have them keep watch with Him would be a solace to His spirit. His request for human company and sympathy is surely instructive. It is good to seek and rely upon the fellowship and help of fellow believers. This is one way God has provided for the wants of our nature in times of loneliness and as believers we have a role in contributing to the needs of God’s people. Paul writing to the Romans said they should be “distributing [communicating] to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality” (Romans 12:13). We may look for it, have a right to expect it, even hope to receive it and yet be disappointed as was the Saviour. He found His followers weak and slumbering. Human fellowship and support are not something we can command. There are the occasions when


it is not forthcoming, and we seek for it in vain, so we cannot be too reliant on human compassion. If it is supplied be thankful but if it is withheld, you can know something infinitely better. The heart of Christ is a human and tender heart; and as it is your privilege to lean on His arm for support, it is also your privilege and duty to lean upon His heart for sympathy. It is His delight still to calm a troubled sea and speak peace in a scene of loneliness and gloom. He is just as much your consolation as your strength.

What did Jesus do when the stream of human sympathy was dry? He engaged in prayer to His Father and found all He needed in communion with Him. What then should you do? Go to your Father in Heaven and find all the strength and comfort required in a lonely hour. He is your own reconciled Father in Christ – “Thou shalt call me, my Father” (Jeremiah 3:19). The presence and voice of a caring earthly parent are precious and comforting particularly when the presence is realized, and the voice heard in a dark hour of solitude.

The Lord Jesus promised: “I will not leave you comfortless [orphans]: I will come to you” (John 14:18). Your heavenly Father is with you to cheer your loneliness. Since your Father is with you, you cannot be alone. Friends may forsake and your dearest may die, yet your solace is, “my Father is with me”. Your Father’s eye is ever watching, His presence is with you and His arm is around you. Soon the day will break and all earth’s shadows will flee. That day will be “as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds” (2 Samuel 23:4). Then the full unclouded presence of your Father will be known.

Who is alone, if God be nigh?
Who shall repine at loss of friends,
While he has One of boundless power,
Whose constant kindness never ends;
Whose presence felt enhances joy,
Whose love can stop the flowing tear,
And cause upon the darkest cloud
The pledge of mercy to appear. ■

✍ **Rev Leslie Curran,**
Director of Let The Bible Speak radio ministry.



“In preaching Christ to sinners we must be sure to give them the great truths that God’s Word sets forth about Him...”

Preaching Christ

What does it mean to preach Christ? It would be difficult to give a better answer to that question than C. H. Spurgeon did as he preached the first sermon in the newly erected Metropolitan Tabernacle in London: “I would propose that the subject of the ministry of this house ... shall be the person of Jesus Christ. ... The body of divinity to which I would pin and bind myself forever, God helping me, is... Christ Jesus, who is the sum and substance of the gospel; who is in himself all theology, the incarnation of every precious truth, the all-glorious personal embodiment of the way, the truth, and the life.”

Spurgeon was in true apostolic succession. The Apostle Paul said, “We preach Christ crucified” (1 Corinthians 1:23). Neither the Jews nor the Gentiles liked the message, the former dismissing it as a scandal and the other as foolishness. But however bitter their opposition, this was Paul’s only message: “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord” (2 Corinthians 4:5). To him, this was the grand subject of all Scripture, an inexhaustible mine of divine truth. Thus, he said, “Unto me ... is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Ephesians 3:8). He told the Hebrews, “God hath spoken to

us by his Son” (Hebrews 1:1). In other words, all God has to say to us He says in Christ, who is His full and final message to men. He must, therefore, be our message too.

The Bible uses a variety of expressions that are equivalent to “We preach Christ,” such as preaching “the word”; declaring “all the counsel of God”; testifying that Christ “was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead” (2 Timothy 4:2; Acts 20:27; Acts 10:42). From such language, we must conclude with Spurgeon that Christ is central to – the vital heart of – all our preaching and teaching, both to sinners and to saints.

In preaching Christ to sinners we must be sure to give them the great truths that God’s Word sets forth about Him—His deity, His incarnation, His true humanity, His impeccable sinlessness, His obedience to God’s law for us, as to both its precept and its penalty, His vicarious atonement, His bodily resurrection and its significance to us (Romans 4:25; Acts 17:31) and His ascension into heaven as our great high priest and advocate with the Father (Hebrews 4:14, 15; 1 John 2:1). We must present Him as the only Saviour of sinners (Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6) and bring to men His command to them to “repent and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15). We must woo lost souls with His gracious invitation (Matthew 11:28), assuring them of His almighty power to save (Hebrews 7:25) and of His faithful promise to receive all who come to Him (John 6:37). Furthermore we must always maintain the centrality and all-sufficiency of His sacrificial death. We cannot preach Christ at all unless we, like Paul, preach “Christ crucified.”

Having said all this, we are only scratching the surface of the infinite fulness of Christ (Colossians 1:19; 2:9). All the truths a sinner needs to hear—whether God’s holiness, or justice, or love; or his own sinfulness and guilt before God and his urgent need to be saved; or the Bible’s teachings about the glories of heaven, or the horrors of hell—are all truly preached only as they are presented in light of the core of our message, which is “Christ and Him crucified.”

We must preach Christ to saints as well as to sinners. A fatal delusion has gained acceptance among some Christians and, sadly, some preachers, that the gospel is God’s message for the salvation of sinners (gloriously true!) but that we need something beyond the gospel to teach believers and let them grow in the Christian life (absolute nonsense!).

Consider a subject that has long posed problems for many believers, assurance of salvation. How often souls troubled as to whether in coming to Christ they “really” believed or were sincere enough, or penitent enough, or some such thing, are told that if they are not sure they should make a new decision and thus now become certain. Usually, this leads to even greater confusion and frustration. The sure way

of dealing with such souls is to keep Christ before them in the all-sufficiency of His person and work and the absolute trustworthiness of His promise. In this way, assurance is seen to be based on the solid foundation of Christ’s merits and not on the shifting sands of their own imperfect works (including their faith and repentance) and feelings.

The New Testament epistles all teach God’s people to live by the faith of the gospel, to run the race “looking unto Jesus” (Hebrews 12:2, 3). What is this looking? Paul tells us, “Consider Christ.” He is the great object of our faith and only by exercising faith in Him can we live as Christians. Paul’s classic statement in Galatians 2:20 goes to the heart of true Christian living, “I am [or, have been] crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Whether we understand “the faith of the Son of God” subjectively as our faith in Him, or objectively as His gospel, the message is the same.

Consider Paul’s Epistle to the Romans. He has to deal with a host of deep and persistent problems ranging from personal holiness and victory over sin to how Jewish and Gentile Christians should treat each other and how they should both live in relation to their heathen rulers and to the world around them. These are huge issues. How does Paul go about the task? Not by setting down a list of “principles,” really rules that stand unrelated to Christ and the gospel. No, he expounds the gospel, particularly justification, the imputed righteousness of Christ, our union with Christ and the ministry of His Spirit. This is the basis on which he builds his message of Christian sanctification and service. He follows the same method in all his epistles. This is particularly evident when it comes to his way of motivating believers to love and serve the Lord. He does not lay a load of guilt on them and at once call for a decision to get right with God as too many modern preachers do. No, rather he says, “I beseech you by the mercies of God” (Romans 12:1), that is, consider all I have said about Christ and His gospel and in light of that truth present your bodies to Him for His service. As he told the Corinthians, “The love of Christ [His love for us] constraineth us” (2 Corinthians 5:14).

It is vital that we preach Christ. We must never imagine that the great truths of the gospel are so well known and understood that they may safely be left unstated and make calling sinners and saints to obedience the great burden of our message. Faith in Christ is the great wellspring from which all obedience flows. So, let us preach Christ in all His fulness to men in all their need. ■

✍ **Dr Alan Cairns,**
Minister Emeritus Faith Free Presbyterian Church,
Greenville, USA.

Ordination and Installation of Rev Timothy Ormerod in Sixmilecross

(Pictures courtesy of Isobel O'Brien)

Rev Timothy Ormerod was ordained and installed as the minister of Sixmilecross Free Presbyterian Church on Friday 16th November 2018. He is pictured with his wife Alix and sons, Judah and Reuben. His new address and contact details are: Rev T Ormerod, 112 Cooley Road, Sixmilecross, Co. Tyrone, BT799DH. Tel. 028 807 57414

Rev T Ormerod (centre) pictured with the office bearers of Sixmilecross Free Presbyterian Church



Magherafelt Sunday School Presentations

Anna Clements, who recited the entire Shorter Catechism and Emma Clements and Elsie Rainey, who both recited the entire Child's Catechism, pictured with Rev Ryan McKee, Mrs Hannah McKee and Sunday School Superintendent, Roy Campbell.



Ordination and Installation of Rev Daniel Henderson in Moneyslane

Rev Daniel Henderson was ordained and installed as the minister of Moneyslane Free Presbyterian Church on Thursday 15th November 2018. He is pictured centre with Rev G Dane (Moderator), Rev A Patterson, (back row) Mr D McCombe, Revs J Greer and D Creane. (Picture courtesy of The County Down Outlook).



Installation of Rev Geoffrey Abraham in Mulvin Free Presbyterian Church

Rev Geoffrey Abraham was installed as the minister of Covenanters' Memorial Free Presbyterian Church, Mulvin on Saturday 26th October 2018. He is pictured with the office bearers of the church.



Rev J Greer, (Clerk of Presbytery) pictured asking the prescribed questions to Rev G Abraham during his installation service.

Installation of Rev James Porter in Enniskillen

Rev James Porter was installed as the minister of Bethel Free Presbyterian Church, Enniskillen, on Tuesday 20th November 2018. He is pictured with his wife Helen, mother and parents-in-law Rev and Mrs D Linden. His new address and contact details are, Rev James Porter, Bethel Manse, 34 Tullyavey Rd, Laragh, Ballinamallard, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh BT94 2GL. T: 028 6632 7491.

Rev James Porter and office bearers of Bethel Free Presbyterian Church, Enniskillen



Mullaglass Sunday School Presentations

Mullaglass Free Presbyterian Church presented certificates to Sophie Cartmill and Jemima Anderson for successfully answering all of the questions in the Child's Catechism. They are pictured with Rev John Morrow and Mullaglass minister, Rev Paul Fitzsimons.



Portavogie Free Presbyterian Church Celebrates 60 Years

Portavogie Free Presbyterian Church celebrated 60 years of witness in the village towards the end of last year. A Gospel Mission was held with previous ministers of the congregation taking part. Mrs Ruby Thompson, the last remaining foundation member, was presented with a commemorative Bible and 60th Anniversary pens were given to everyone associated with the congregation. A major new extension and redevelopment of existing facilities are in the planning stage and it is hoped that the work will commence in the 60th year of the congregation. Pictured are Dr John Douglas, the first minister of the congregation and present minister Rev Samuel Murray.



Aghalee Sunday School Presentations

Grace Harbinson and Harry Salt are pictured after receiving certificates for answering all the questions in the Child's Catechism. Included is their teacher, Mrs Charlotte Green, Mr Geoff Butler, Superintendent and Rev Cairin Salt (centre).





"THE BLOOD
OF JESUS
CHRIST HIS SON
CLEANSETH US
FROM ALL SIN."
1 John 1v7

BATH TIME

Whenever I was little, Saturday night was always bath night. As a child, hearing the gush of the water taps running upstairs, knowing that I would soon be called to come up for a bath, filled me with dread. I didn't want a bath. I didn't need a bath. When the call came, "Your bath is ready", I would always insist that I was okay. Then, when that didn't work I would bring my sister into the debate, "Bath her first, she is dirtier than me!" (It wasn't true of course). In the end, all my protests fell on deaf ears. All my arguments were brought to nought. It was my bath time.

In a small way, such behaviour reminds me of the excuses sinners make when they are called to come for cleansing to the Saviour. Many feel they are clean enough. Some divert the attention onto others, claiming that they are more in need of cleansing than they are themselves. However, the effectual call of God in this matter cannot and will not be ignored.

But back to my story, within ten minutes I re-emerged from a steamy

bathroom, wearing a fresh pair of pyjamas, smelling of shampoo, almost sparkling and believe it or not, I was happy in my newfound clean and fresh condition. Again, what a reminder of the happy state a person finds themselves in having been cleansed and washed from all their sins by the blood of the Lamb.

There is one final thought, however, that I want to leave with you with regards to bath time and that is, although I was lovely and clean, the water in the bath was filthy dirty. Now, my mother didn't keep that water to remind me of just how unclean I was. No, she pulled the plug and the water drained away never to be seen again. What a reminder this is of what God does with our sin. They are cast into the sea of his forgetfulness (Micah 7:19).

Boys and girls, I wonder if you have heard the call of God. Have you been cleansed from all your sin? Do you have peace in your heart knowing that your sin has been cast into the depths of the sea forever and ever?



There is a story in the Bible about a man that had to wash. Use the missing letters from the alphabets below to find out his name for the quiz.

- ☐ A B C D E F G H I J K L M O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
- ☐ B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
- ☐ B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
- ☐ A B C D E F G H I J K L N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
- ☐ B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
- ☐ A B C D E F G H I J K L M O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CHURCH:

PRIZES!

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

Rev Garth Wilson
Email: answer@fpvision.org
39 Millreagh Ave, Dundonald,
Belfast, BT16 1TZ

£5 WINNERS LAST TIME

- » Harry Fitzsimmons (Martyrs FPC)
- » Judah Sloan (Portavogie FPC)
- » Andrew Tinsle (Aghalee FPC)
- » Zara Barnes (Hillsborough FPC)
- » Alisia Morrison (Hebron FPC)
- » Jack Chambers (Ballymena FPC)
- » Bethany Hanna (Ballymena FPC)
- » Jonah Whiteside (Portavogie FPC)

a DIVINE DIET



Iwonder how many New Year's resolutions you have made already? More exercise, better diet, study harder, get a new job!

Maybe one of the most popular resolutions that people make is to go on a diet and try to shed excess pounds put on over the festive season. There are many different types of diet, with some being more successful than others. However, there is one diet that we should all go on and this diet will not make us lose weight but rather make us fatter spiritually. It is a diet which will be good for the soul and the body. It is a diet of divine truth and it is available to us within the pages of Scripture. This is a diet that we should follow, not just for a period of a few weeks or months, but every day.

The prophet Jeremiah understood the significance of this heavenly fare and said, "Thy words were found and I did eat them" (Jeremiah 15:16). God's servant used very clear and pictorial language to speak of an exercise that we should all engage in.

Jeremiah the prophet was searching for the word from God. It is interesting, as you read through his prophecy, to note little phrases such as, "the Lord said unto me" or "the word that came to Jeremiah." When he testifies that the words were found we can be sure that he was searching for them. This speaks of an appetite for the word of

God. He wanted to find out more. We should approach the word of God with a spiritual desire and appetite to study more and learn more about Christ as He is revealed in the scriptures. To help us study the word of God, we should use good commentaries, concordances and other good material but most all of we should pray the Holy Spirit would, 'open the eyes of our understanding.' Bishop J C Ryle said, "We must read our Bibles like men digging for treasure."

Jeremiah's searching led to satisfaction. After the words were found, he digested them. They were sweet to his taste. The language employed is very graphic and very descriptive. Jeremiah consumed the words. He fed upon the words and was nourished and satisfied by them. The Psalmist said, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Psalm 119:103). If you dip your finger into a honeycomb, it is sweet but when you dip your finger into the word of God and meditate upon it, it is sweeter still, sweeter than honey to the mouth.

There is a supply from God's word. Jeremiah noted, "...thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." God's word brought joy,

**"How sweet
are thy words
unto my taste!
yea, sweeter
than honey to
my mouth."**



happiness and pleasure to him. What pleasure God's word must bring to His people as we take the Scriptures and hear God speak to us through them.

Maybe this New Year we could all resolve to go on this diet of divine truth and feast more and more on the manna of the word of God. May this be one New Year's resolution that we never give up. ■

✍ **Rev Garth Wilson,**
*minister of Sandown Free Presbyterian
Church and associate editor of Free
Presbyterian Vision.*



**WILLIAM
IRVINE**
KILSYTH



EDWARD COONEY
ENNISKILLEN



The Cooneyites

The Cooneyites have origins in Northern Ireland but can be found in many parts of the world especially America, Canada and Australia. The group claims no formal name or creed. They have no formal church buildings. Their services are often advertised as ‘non-denominational gospel meetings’ or ‘Christian conventions’. Their preachers go out two by two. They embrace a high standard of morality and adopt a humble and conservative dress code. They only use the Bible and put emphasis on living ‘the Jesus Way’. Many non-suspecting people take this sect as being genuinely Christian, albeit with a few idiosyncrasies.

For the sake of clarity, this article will refer to them as ‘The Cooneyites’ (although this is a title they will not generally recognise). Others refer to them as ‘Irvinites’, ‘Go-Preachers’, ‘2 x 2s’, ‘The Way’ or as ‘The Nameless House Church’, among other things.

The movement can be traced back to William Irvine who was born in Kilsyth, Scotland in 1863. He professed salvation in Motherwell under the ministry of an evangelical Presbyterian preacher, Rev John McNeil. Soon afterwards Irvine himself began preaching and quickly joined the ranks of the Faith

Mission. In 1896 he came to Ireland as a pilgrim evangelist where he became an area superintendent for the mission.

William Irvine was possessed with a strong personality, strong convictions and an ability to preach powerful and moving sermons. Under his ministry there were quite a number of converts. All the while, however, Irvine was becoming discontent with the churches of his time, feeling that they were not disciplining the converts sufficiently. Soon he began denouncing all churches and calling people to separate from them. By 1901 he had formally cut his ties with the Faith Mission due to their cooperation with the churches. Eventually, he cut ties with all ecclesiastical establishments and began working as an independent.

In 1884 another, Edward Cooney, professed faith in Christ. He too went on to become a powerful ‘soul winner’ and evidently was greatly used. In 1901 he left his father’s drapery business in Enniskillen in order to work with William Irvine. Cooney also began to denounce all churches, urging ‘Christians’ to have nothing to do with them. Cooney greatly admired Irvine and took him to be a genuine prophet under God.

Irvine began to hold to the principles of Matthew 10:7-10 (of which, a careful study of will reveal our Lord's instructions to be of a temporary nature), sending out his preachers two by two and living an ascetic lifestyle. He was intensely critical of "paid Christian workers" and exhorted his converts to "forsake everything in order to go preach." This practice was to become a fundamental rule of discipleship. By 1904 there were 150 'go preachers'.

The movement began holding conventions which were closely styled after the Keswick pattern. The first was in 1903 in Rathmoylon. In 1907 the conventions were moved to Crocknacrieve where the attendances were sometimes as high as 1500 people. Many felt called to be preachers at the conventions and took vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and even celibacy. Go preachers went as far as America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, South America and Europe. Preaching was usually without notes, the preachers claiming to be 'Spirit-led' and baptism by immersion became a staple of the sermons.

One pinnacle teaching became 'the living witness doctrine' which stressed that a person could only be saved through the direct preaching of one of the Cooneyites. This led to the movement becoming ever more secretive. To this day, it is hard to get a person from this sect to talk openly about what they believe and why.

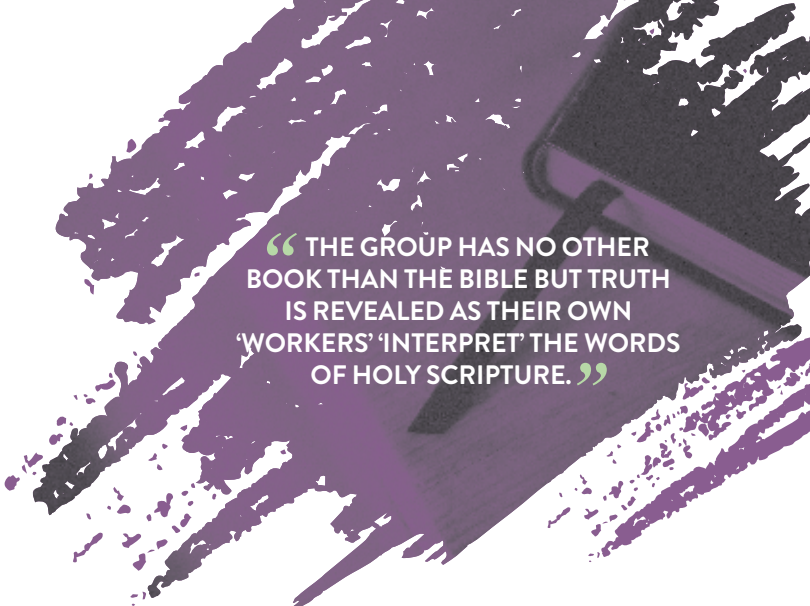
The preachers themselves believed Irvine's teaching was a revelation and that they owed their understanding of the gospel to him. Rejecters of the exclusive message were bluntly told they were going to hell if they did not accept the teaching and join the new fellowship.

In time William Irvine concluded that not all converts needed to be full-time preachers and divided the group into 'saints' and 'workers.' Saints supported the workers in whatever way they could and house meetings began.

Irvine came to believe that he was one of the two witnesses spoken about in Revelation 11. So, convinced was he that he distanced himself from the movement he had started and went to live in Jerusalem. He died in 1947 and, not surprisingly, didn't rise again three and a half days later as stated in verses 9-11 of that chapter.

In 1928 Cooney was dis-fellowshipped from the movement for denying the living witness doctrine and the movement split into two. Cooney began teaching a second chance theology for lost souls and moved to Australia where he died in 1960.

Converts to the movement across the world are generally ignorant of its origins and are told that it is the one true church and can be traced back to the time of Christ. Hence the movement bears no name but still carries the exclusive hallmarks.



“THE GROUP HAS NO OTHER BOOK THAN THE BIBLE BUT TRUTH IS REVEALED AS THEIR OWN ‘WORKERS’ ‘INTERPRET’ THE WORDS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.”

WHAT DOES THIS SECT BELIEVE?

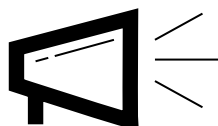
Like all cults and false movements, they are exclusive, claiming to be the sole descendants of the New Testament Church. The group has no other book than the Bible but truth is revealed as their own 'workers' 'interpret' the words of holy scripture. In 1903 William Irvine stated, "Everyone who lifts the voice or pen against Jesus Christ and his messengers - and I am one of them - has to answer to God." As the movement progressed, it began to take on a more Unitarian slant and even the sinlessness and impeccability of Christ were called into question. The doctrine of the Trinity is generally rejected. Former Cooneyites will testify that little emphasis is put on the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross.

Great stress is placed on what is referred to as 'The Jesus Way'. The Jesus Way is a lifestyle that has been formulated by the movement based on some isolated verses of scripture. Conversion to the Jesus Way is essential to salvation and stepping away from it results in the loss of salvation.

The whole doctrine of salvation is really one of having sin atoned for by Christ's life and following His example. The Cooneyite way to peace with God is a jigsaw of grace, works, Christ and lifestyle. It, like every other false gospel, can never result in a true assurance of sins forgiven, acceptance with God and a home in heaven.

While we should seek to be like Christ (1 Peter 2.21 and Philippians 2.5), we must understand that the word of God clearly teaches "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." In assessing the sincere adherent of the group, I can't help but think of the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 10.2-4 when he spoke of the earnest Jew, 'I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.' The great atoning work of Christ is completed. His blood and righteousness are sufficient for my salvation and for all who trust in Him. ■

✍ **Rev Roger Higginson,**
Coleraine Free Presbyterian Church.



YOUTH COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENINGS OF PRAYER

All services at 8.00pm

MID DOWN

8 Feb, Hillsborough FPC

Rev Ian Kenny

MID ULSTER

8 Feb, Lurgan FPC

Preacher TBC

NORTH WEST

8 Feb, Magherafelt FPC

Rev Ryan McKee

SOUTH DOWN

8 Feb, Mourne FPC

Rev Andrew Patterson

GREATER BELFAST & NORTH DOWN

15 Feb, Newtownabbey FPC

Rev Brian McClung

SOUTH WEST

15 Feb, Aghnacloy FPC

Rev Colin Mercer

NORTH & SOUTH ANTRIM

22 Feb, Ballymena FPC

Mr Andrew Stewart

WEST

22 Feb, Clogher Valley FPC

Rev Peter McIntyre

NEXT DELEGATES MEETING

MONDAY 18 FEB

Venue TBC

SPRING REGIONAL RALLIES

FRIDAY 8 MARCH

All services at 8.00pm

GREATER BELFAST & NORTH DOWN

Carryduff FPC

NORTH ANTRIM, SOUTH ANTRIM & NORTH WEST

Randalstown FPC

WEST & SOUTH WEST

Omagh FPC

MID DOWN, SOUTH DOWN & MID ULSTER

Lisburn FPC

EVANGELISM TRAINING WEEKEND

PORTADOWN FAITH MISSION CENTRE

22 - 24 March, Cost: £65

CASTLEWELLAN WEEKEND

FRI 4 - MON 7 MAY

Cost £89

YOUTH COUNCIL CAMP

SHANNAGHMORE OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

29 July - 2 August

Age: 12-18 Cost: £180

£40 deposit required to secure a place

*Application forms for camp and weekend events
available to download from the Youth Council
Website (fpcyouth.org)*

YOUTH COUNCIL MISSION TRIPS 2019

INTERNATIONAL: LIBERIA

July 22 - Aug 3, Age: 18+

NATIONAL: LIVERPOOL

July 20 - 27, Age: 18+

LOCAL: LIMAVADY

Aug 12 - 18, Age: 16+

*For further details see your YC representative
or YC website.*

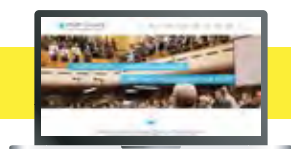
UNITED CHILDREN'S CAMP

HUMPHREY'S AT RATHMORE, LARNE

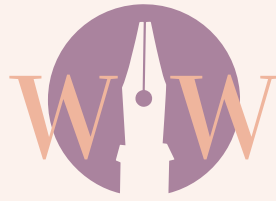
29 July - 2 Aug, Age: 8-12, Cost: £130.00
(This includes accommodation, activities and food).

*There will be a mixture of on-site activities, dorm
devotions and children's meetings every day and
several outings during the week. Space is limited
to 50 children. To secure a place for your child at
camp, please return a completed application form
and a deposit. The closing date for applications
in 15th April 2019. Applications forms are
available online at www.fpcmission.org.*

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FPCYOUTH.ORG



A Word to Women

Rhoda

ACTS 12:1-19

In Acts chapter 12 we are given a glimpse into the life of a young woman called Rhoda. Rhoda is with other Christians in the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark. Mary appears to be a woman of means who was happy to have her ample home used in the Lord's work. Jerusalem was the centre from where the gospel had spread but was also the centre where persecution was most felt. Stephen was martyred and many scattered in the persecution that followed. About ten years on, Herod, the Roman Governor over Judea, decides to flex his muscle against the people of God. James was put to the sword and Peter imprisoned. Herod planned to make a great display of his brutality by having Peter executed after the Passover. However, Herod's plans were to come to nothing for the Lord had purposed the deliverance of Peter. When Peter was miraculously freed from prison he immediately made his way to the home of Mary. Peter wanted to let the Christians know what the Lord had done before escaping to a safer place. Although many were present at Mary's house, only Rhoda is named. Briefly let us consider Rhoda.

Where Rhoda was

Rhoda may well have been a servant but it is obvious that she was a believer. The church had met to pray and although it was very late at night, Rhoda was present. Prayer is a mark of a true Christian. It was said of the newly converted Saul, "... behold he prayeth" (Acts 9: 11). While we can pray anywhere, it is vital to our spiritual growth to meet with others for prayer. Prayer is not solely the domain of the older Christians but, like Rhoda, younger people should be present when the church meets for prayer.

What Rhoda did

Rhoda heard the knocking at the door and went to see who was there. Rhoda was not slacking in attending to whatever needed doing. There was always a danger that soldiers had come to arrest or harass the believers. Peter knew the caution

that was needed and so he spoke from the far side of the door. Rhoda had often sat and listened as Peter had preached and she instantly recognised his voice. She knew how important he was in the work of God and she believed that the Lord had answered prayer.

What Rhoda omitted to do

Rhoda was overcome with joy and excitement. She rushed to share the wonderful news with the rest of the believers and in her haste, she left Peter outside. The King's business may require haste (1 Samuel 21:8) but it also requires care. Peter was in danger and needed shelter but Rhoda left him outside. Youth is generally marked by energy but wisdom comes with experience. When all age groups work together in harmony then the church benefits and goes forward.

How Rhoda was received

Rhoda carried the good news to the praying Christians. The Lord had answered prayer! She was not believed but despite the initial rebuff she continued to insist that Peter was free. Her fellow Christians called her mad. Older believers can easily discourage younger believers and attempt to dampen their zeal, "but it is always good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." (Galatians 4:18)

Thankfully Peter continued to knock and was eventually brought in to the unbelieving, and amazed believers. There he related his wonderful escape. Rhoda's name is recorded as a tribute to her faith and as an example to learn from, whether young or old. Let us exercise more faith when we pray. (Mark 11:24). ■

✍ Olive Maxwell

lived and worked as a missionary in Cork for over twenty years. She is married to Colin who serves with the Mission Board, mostly in the Republic of Ireland.

“ When all age groups work together in harmony then the church benefits and goes forward. ”

“Path to Peace”

Exhibition at
Martyrs Memorial Free Presbyterian Church



Recently, I, along with a number of other Free Presbyterians from Omagh, walked through Rat Alley in Belfast. The short passageway, topped with barbed wire and military-style signage, took us into a compact room, with sandbags, helmets, ‘guns’ and camouflage. There we were briefed on life in the army; the sacrifices that come with fighting on foreign fields and the horrors of war. We were given information on the many young men who left home and country never to return and of the hundreds who came back – injured, changed and shocked by what they had witnessed on distant battlefields.

For many of us, this was one of many poignant parts during a tour of the latest exhibition in the Martyrs Memorial Free Presbyterian Church, Belfast. Following the interest in last year’s display marking the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, the church leadership decided to focus their attention on the 100th Anniversary of the end of World War 1. The “Path to Peace” exhibition begins at the impressive front doors of the church building where there are six references to peace in the inscriptions from scripture and Luther’s theses. Visitors are immediately instructed on the contrast between man’s empty and failing peace and the lasting



“Visitors are immediately instructed on the contrast between man’s empty and failing peace and the lasting peace that is secured for sinners through the person and work of Jesus Christ.”

Bishop Taylor Smith’s work as an evangelical chaplain during the war provides an excellent backdrop to press home the importance of salvation for dying men. The exhibition includes period costumes, artefacts from the front lines, an impressive model of part of the Somme battlefield and numerous war-themed posters. ‘Stamping stations’ are dotted along the tour – providing an opportunity to stamp scripture texts on a prepared information sheet. The information is presented in a timeline format and the guides are well prepared and encourage participation by visitors.

This exhibition is designed primarily for young people but is suitable for all. It is historical – but intensely biblical: beginning and ending with a direct gospel message of peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. The presentation makes it clear that man does not have the answer to his greatest need. Peace with God is only possible through Christ. The minister, office-bearers and congregation are to be commended for an exhibition that exalts Christ and explains the message of true peace. ■

✓ Editor

peace that is secured for sinners through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

The history of the war is rehearsed in considerable detail and the ultimate cause of it explained in terms of man’s sin against God and his fellow man. Rooms in the church have been transformed to portray life in the trenches and a small medical centre underscores the human cost involved when nations go to war with each other. There is a distinct local interest in the exhibition with reference made to Belfast men who bravely fought and gave their lives.



THE “PATH TO PEACE” EXHIBITION IS CONTINUING IN 2019. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT DR IAN BROWN AT MARTYRS MEMORIAL FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BELFAST

Aughnacloy Free Presbyterian Church Opens New Church Building

“ THE CONGREGATION IS THANKFUL FOR ALL OF THE MESSAGES OF SUPPORT AND THE MANY GIFTS RECEIVED AT THE OPENING SERVICE. ”

A capacity congregation gathered in Aughnacloy Free Presbyterian Church on Saturday 13th October to witness the official opening of the new church building.

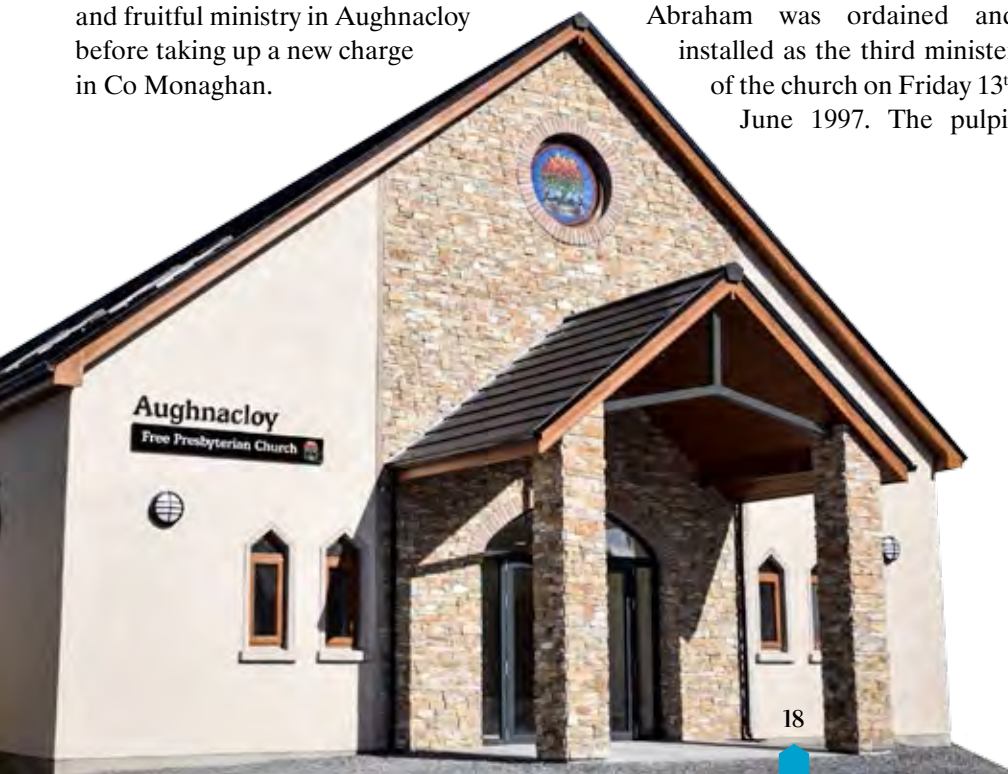
The Free Presbyterian witness in Aughnacloy began in the early 1980s as the result of a gospel mission conducted by the late Rev Austin Allen and Rev Fred Greenfield. Following that mission, regular church services were conducted for a short time in Aughnacloy Orange hall. Shortly afterwards, premises were purchased on the Caledon Road and after some renovation work, the building was officially opened on Saturday 23rd January 1982 by the then Moderator, Dr Ian Paisley. In 1984, Mr Gordon Dane was placed as the student in charge of the fledgling congregation. He was later ordained and installed as its first minister. Rev Dane had a useful and fruitful ministry in Aughnacloy before taking up a new charge in Co Monaghan.



In 1992 Rev Dynes Uprichard was installed as the new minister and remained until 1996 when he moved to pioneer a Free Presbyterian congregation in Wales. Following Rev Uprichard's departure, Mr Geoffrey Abraham was ordained and installed as the third minister of the church on Friday 13th June 1997. The pulpit

became vacant once more in May 2018 and Rev Colin Mercer (Omagh) was appointed as the interim moderator.

The new building is considerably larger than the previous church and includes suitable Sunday School rooms, prayer room, youth fellowship hall, minister's room and creche facilities. The upstairs can be accessed by an elevator and a video and audio system have been installed. The congregation is thankful for all of the messages of support and the many gifts received at the opening service. ■



Presbytery Treasurer Retires

Mr David Browne has retired as Treasurer of Presbytery after almost 30 years of faithful service. At a dinner to honour him, the Finance Committee Convenor, Rev Ian Kenny, thanked Mr Browne and commended him for his many years of labour, highlighting that during his time in office, Mr Browne has served alongside five

different Moderators of Presbytery and three Conveners of Finance Committee. Suitable presentations were made to Mr and Mrs Browne to mark the occasion.

Mr Browne will remain a valued member of the Finance Committee. Mr Colin McKee has been appointed as the new Treasurer of Presbytery. ■



Mr and Mrs Browne (centre) are pictured receiving gifts from Rev G Dane (Moderator) and Mrs L McKee.

Farewell for Rev James Porter

Markethill Free Presbyterian Church recently hosted a farewell service for Rev James Porter and his family. Rev Porter has served in Markethill for 13 years and has recently

been installed as the minister of Bethel Free Presbyterian Church, Enniskillen. During the farewell service, mention was made of his pastoral care, evangelical zeal and faithful ministry. ■



Rev James Porter with his wife and family at the farewell service in Markethill Free Presbyterian Church.

Free Presbyterian Vision: Business Manager

In June 2012 the General Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church decided to establish a new official magazine. The Publications Committee was tasked with bringing this decision to fruition. Colin McKee, an elder in Comber, was appointed the Business Manager. That the first issue of Free Presbyterian Vision was printed and circulated in January 2013 was due in a large part to Colin's hard work. Colin has proved to be a true 'Tychicus' to the Publications Committee. Tychicus was a fellow servant and a brother beloved of the apostle Paul, Colossians 4:7. One important ministry for the Lord by Tychicus was to make sure that Paul's messages arrived with the various congregations to which he wrote. Colin has, over these years, arranged that the magazine was printed and circulated to various countries, as well as administering the finances.

As Mr McKee has recently been appointed the treasurer of Presbytery, he has relinquished his post with the magazine. Please pray that the Lord will bless Colin in his new position and also bless Ian Campbell, an elder in Mourne, as he takes up the role of Business Manager. ■

Thank You

On behalf of the Mission Board, I would like to thank those who sent in various anonymous donations for missionary work in 2018.

We cannot personally acknowledge such anonymous gifts, so instead, we would like to publicly thank all those who sent in both large and small donations. Each gift sent in for various

causes and missionaries has been honoured. For those who prefer such means of giving, we thank you all in the Lord's Name. "That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6 v 4). ■

✉ **Rev Ian Harris,**
Chairman.

'Well done, good and Faithful Servant'

✉ **Rev. John Hanna**
and his wife Noranna



Rev. John Hanna has retired as a missionary under the Mission Board at the end of December 2018. He continues to serve the Lord in Spain, ministering in Alorcón, Toledo, and wherever else as the Lord enables him. Mr and Mrs Hanna were the first missionaries to be sent to the mission field under the auspices of the Free Presbyterian Mission Board. They left Northern Ireland on 13th April 1977 to go to language school at the Mangold Institute in Madrid. Their early work involved door-to-door visitation in Vallecas, a town outside Madrid. During their second year in Spain, they became associated with a Reformed Presbyterian church in Alorcón, a town with a population of approximately 200,000 inhabitants. This became the base for their future work in Spain.

After three probationary years, Mr and Mrs Hanna came home to Northern Ireland accompanied by their first child Jonathan who had been born exactly one year earlier. On 28th March, 1980, Mr. Hanna was ordained to the Christian ministry in his home church in Ballymoney. When he returned to Spain, it was as the first ordained Free Presbyterian missionary. At the end of that year in December, their second son, Joel, was born. In 1981, due to the pastor's ill health, the session of Alorcón requested that Rev. Hanna should serve as assistant pastor.

A further development came in 1988 when the Spanish pastor resigned, and Rev. Hanna became the minister of the church.

Mr Hanna has continued until this day to serve the Lord faithfully in Alorcón and, in recent years, in the new work in Toledo. Under God, he has seen sinners brought to Christ and the congregations grow numerically. His co-pastor Rev. Angel Alvarez continues as the official minister in Alorcón, and the work continues to prosper. The Chairman and members of the Mission Board, together with his colleagues in the Presbytery, wish John and Noranna well as they reach this milestone in their ministry. ■

✉ **Rev David Park,**
*Secretary of the Mission Board and
Chairman of the Missionary Council.*

Free Presbyterian Radio Shut Down by Severe Lightning Strike in Monrovia



The Free Presbyterian Mission in Liberia's radio station was knocked off the air on October 29th at 3:30 p.m., local time, in Monrovia, Liberia, after they were hit by severe lightning during a mild thunderstorm. Retired Free Presbyterian minister Rev. Maurice Baxter, who was visiting the mission at the time of the storm, said, "It was quite dry before the lightning struck. It just came out of nowhere." Rev. David DiCanio, the manager of the station and one of two missionaries on the ground in the country, also said that the strike was sudden and without any warning. He commented, "There was really no storm when the lightning struck. I was sitting in the studio working on some programming and noticed light rain starting outside. Suddenly, out of nowhere, there was a large crack-type explosion. The power supply for the laptop exploded open, and pieces of plastic shot across the room."

In addition to the lightning strike destroying the exciter/controller board and the power supply distribution board on the transmitter, the station also lost a MacBook Pro, an internet system which is essential

to run the station and automatically download the news every hour, other sound devices and power supply, and two hard drives which carried Mr DiCanio's personal data. The cost of replacement will involve almost \$8000.00.

Following the strike, the missionaries have sought additional advice on how to prevent such damage from happening again and also discovered that the offending outlet was not properly grounded during construction. The station does have a brush-type lightning rod at the top of the tower connected by copper cable to a 4'x4' copper lattice system in the ground. They also have a lightning rod connected to each set of guy-wires at their anchor points. Although they are being told that there is more protection they need to do, there is never a 100 per cent guarantee against lightning strikes.

Prayer is requested that the station would soon be able to resume broadcasting as it is a vital part of Free Presbyterian mission work in Liberia. ■

✍ **Rev David DiCanio,**
Free Presbyterian Missionary, Liberia.

Precious Children's Home Opens New Building in Nepal

✍ Rev Wesley Graham is pictured officially opening the new orphanage in Nepal.



✍ Children who attended the opening.



Report from the McAuleys: Kenya

David and Rachel McAuley were accepted by the Mission Board to serve in Kenya for three months from September to November 2018. The Mission Board appreciates their willingness to go and serve. Their time spent in Kenya was blessed of the Lord and a great encouragement to the Kenyan believers. We commend this young couple to the prayers of God's people.

✍ **Rev Ian Harris**
(Chairman)



We left for Kenya on the 5th September and returned on the 1st December. We thank the Lord for our time there. We have been blessed, encouraged, and also challenged by the things that we were involved in.

We spent the majority of our time living in Kakamega, a large university town. The opportunities here are endless, but we found ourselves particularly busy with a Bible study, held in Beulah Bookshop each Tuesday at 1.00 p.m. As it is mainly students who attend, numbers vary, depending on class schedules. We were always amazed by

the depth of the questions that would be asked after each study. There was also a book table witness held in the town. In Nyaporo, we held a prayer meeting each week; and, on the Lord's Day, we taught the Discipleship Course. Although we have left Kenya, we ask God's people to pray for Patrice who will take on the Bible study and Discipleship classes, plus other ministries; the witness of the Bookshop in Kakamega; the spiritual growth of the students in Kakamega; the church in Nyaporo; and God's direction in our lives concerning our future. ■

✍ **David and Rachel McAuley**

Rev. and Mrs Baxter return from Liberia

Rev. Maurice Baxter and his wife Chrismar have recently returned from a three-month mission trip to Liberia. They travelled to Monrovia to assist Rev. David DiCanio during Miss Joanne Greer's furlough. Their service and practical help has been a great blessing in the work and much appreciated by the Mission Board. On their return, the Baxters spoke of several of the challenges they faced in Liberia including language (Liberian English), the hot humid climate, and the traffic, which is often dangerous.

Rev. Baxter noted, "We enjoyed the Lord's presence daily but especially in the services." On 25th November, the church had a Liberian lunch for everyone at Pastor Dahn's home, where Rev. and Mrs Baxter were presented with traditional Liberia tunics. ■

✍ Rev and Mrs Baxter wearing Liberian tunics; gifts from the congregation in Paynesville, Liberia.



A Letter from Noel Shields: One Year On

✉ Evangelist Noel Shields (third left) pictured with Revs L Wilson, R Robinson and J Creane.



Dear praying friends,

A sincere thank you to all who have supported me over the past year as I re-commenced my work as an evangelist under the Mission Board. Your practical and prayerful support is vital and much appreciated.

Over the past year I have had many opportunities to preach the gospel in various places including Augher, Lurgan, Mountnorris, Markethill, and Annalong. I have also preached at two gospel campaigns in the south of Ireland. I thank God for those who attended and heard the simple message of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The work among the children was a blessing to my own heart. I held holiday Bible Clubs and children's missions throughout various congregations. This is an encouraging work, and it could not be done without the good support of God's people. We trust that the Lord will bless His Word to the salvation of souls among the children.

In the New Year, I am planning to visit Rathfriland, Killylea, and "The Village" area of Belfast. I am looking to the Lord to help us reach the lost of our province with the gospel of Christ. ■

✉ Noel Shields

Special Sending Forth Service for Miss Noreen McAfee

RETURNING MISSIONARY TO UGANDA



FRIDAY 11 JAN 2019, 8PM

Hebron Free Presbyterian Church, Ballymoney.

Special Sending Forth Service for Miss Joanne Greer

RETURNING MISSIONARY TO LIBERIA



FRIDAY 8 FEB 2019, 8PM

James Kyle Paisley Memorial Free Presbyterian Church, Ballymena.

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Dates For The Diary

JANUARY

11th - 13th

HEBRON, BALLYMONEY
51ST ANNUAL MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

Time: Friday 8.00pm

Saturday 7.30pm

Sunday 12noon & 7.00pm

Speaker: Rev D Brown

Reports: N McAfee, J Greer,
S Johnston, D Park

25th

MARKETHILL
ANNUAL YOUTH RALLY

Time: Friday 8.00pm

Speaker: Rev P Foster

FEBRUARY

8th

BALLYMENA,
SENDING FORTH SERVICE
JOANNE GREER (LIBERIA)

Time: Friday 8.00pm

Speaker: Rev T Nelson and
members of Mission Board

17th-22nd

MULLAGLASS
BIBLE WEEK

Time: Sunday 7.00pm

Mon-Fri 8.00pm

Speaker: Rev J Greer

MAY

19th-31st

ARMAGH, BALLYMAGERNEY,
MARKETHILL, PORTADOWN, TANDRAGEE
COMBINED GOSPEL TENT MISSION

Time: Sunday 8.30pm

Mon-Fri 8.00pm

Speaker: Rev W McCrea

