

Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

Mental Illness

What the Gospel
has to say

A Tribute to
Rev Dr Kenneth
Elliott

The
Charismatic
Movement



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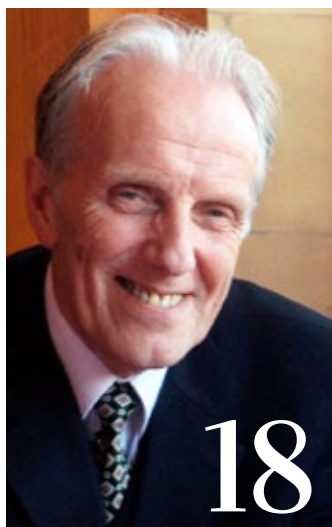
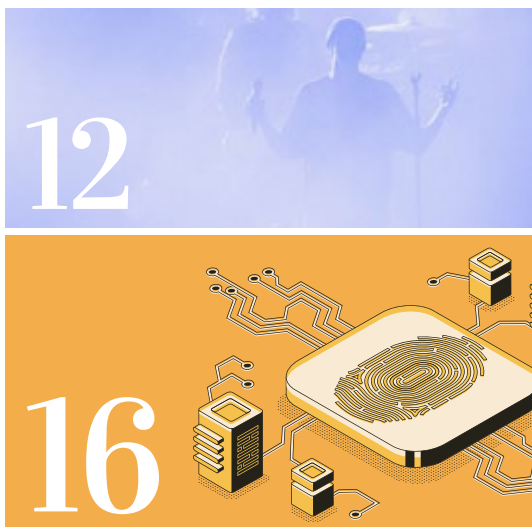
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“Ensure that you have the experience of the new birth; that you are growing in grace and that the fruit of the Spirit is being cultivated in you. Endeavour to get to know God more...”

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Editorial

In 2016, the United Kingdom voted by a small majority to leave the European Union. Since then, national news has been dominated by events surrounding Brexit. Political and social commentators have tried to explain the negotiations and unravel the legal jargon that accompanies such an historic event. Some pundits predict catastrophe if there is no deal, while others predict catastrophe if there is a bad deal. These are surely uncertain times.

However, the Scriptures remind us that God is sovereign over all the affairs of men and that He is working all things according to the counsel of His own wise and perfect will. Daniel noted that the “most High ruleth in the kingdom of men”. This divine sovereignty extends to events in our nation. Our God reigns. He is not a mere spectator over world events. He is not caught unawares by the movements of nations. He is not helpless or powerless in world affairs. Rather, God is in absolute control. Therefore, we can trust Him to do all things well.

Understanding the sovereignty and omnipotence of God is an antidote to unnecessary fears and doubts. In Psalm 73, Asaph was disturbed at the apparent prosperity of the wicked while God’s people suffered. He could not comprehend the mystery of that, and it almost drove him to distraction. But when he went into the sanctuary of God, he understood that God would preserve His people and punish the wicked and that, though there was trouble, all would be well. This glorious truth resulted in him being able to say, “It is good for me to draw near to God.” This is good counsel in uncertain times. Our times are in God’s hands. He is working all things together for the good of His people. We are safe in Christ. And whatever is happening in this world, and in our nation, Christ is still building His church, and the gospel will prevail. Brexit or no Brexit, God is on the throne. ■

✉ Editor

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March On

Every year when the month of March comes around, we feel our spirits lifting. The onset of Spring, with singing birds, budding plants and longer daylight hours, is a source of great delight. The ancient Romans, who gave March its name, had a completely different perspective. They had many false deities. Their god of war was called “Mars”, and the Romans named the month of March after him. In ancient Rome, several festivals of Mars took place in March because that was the earliest month of the year when the weather was mild enough to start a war. For them, this was the month when they got geared up to go forth conquering and to conquer. The month of March therefore marked the time when the armies of Rome went on the march again.

When the children of Israel were making their way from Egypt to the Promised Land, the expedition was both extensive and exhaustive. The journey of life can be like this for the believer. There are many obstacles along the way before we reach heaven. We face a formidable foe. In Exodus 14:10, we read, “And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold,

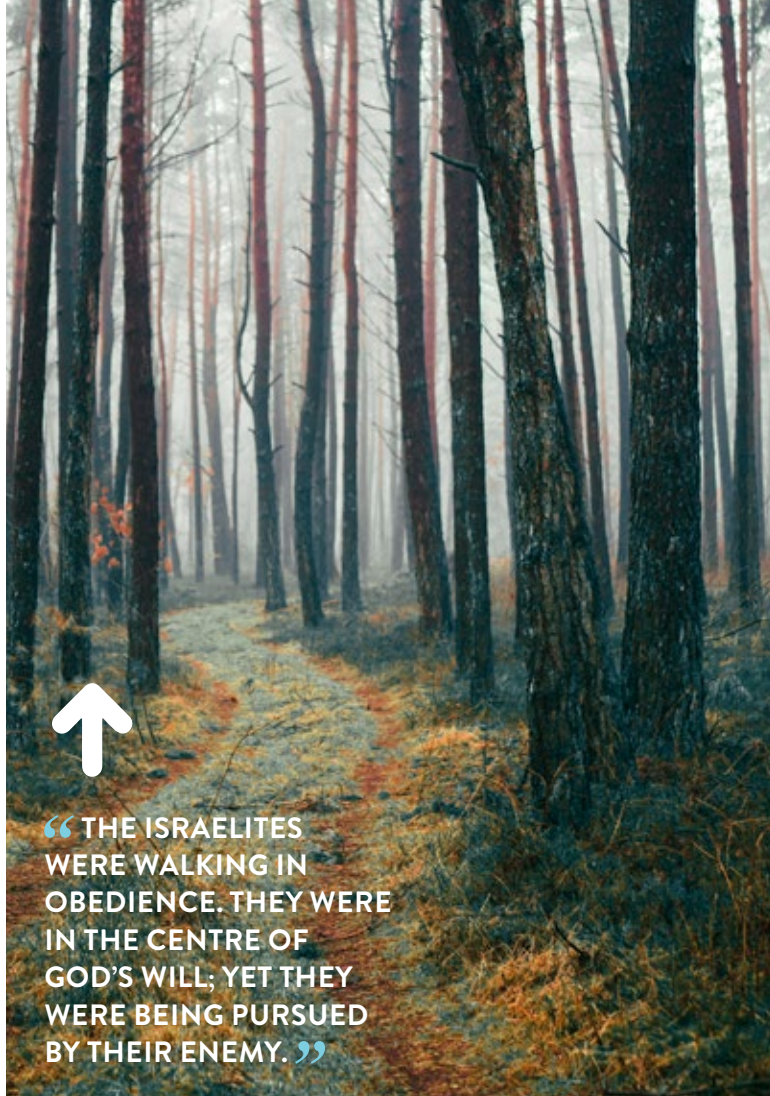
the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD.” Moses was leading the children of Israel out of Egypt just as the Lord had commanded. The Israelites were walking in obedience. They were in the centre of God’s will; yet they were being pursued by their enemy. They were terrified, for they knew only too well how an angry Pharaoh would vent his displeasure. Sometimes fear takes hold of us whenever the enemy is snapping at our heels.

At such a time, we need to remember that we have a faithful friend. The Lord opened up the Red Sea and provided

a way of escape and a route to safety for His people. He always does. He went further, though. We need not fear the march of the enemy when we contemplate Psalm 68:7, “O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah.” The Lord marched before His people as He led them on the perilous journey through the wilderness. “And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.” (Exodus 13:21). Fanny

Crosby summed it up well when she wrote: “All the way my Saviour leads me.” One final verse, Habbakuk 3:12, speaks of a fierce finale: “Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger.” The Canaanites were unable to resist the Israelites because God was marching at their head and pouring out His righteous anger upon His enemies. Christ has secured the victory, and every knee will bow to Him. Therefore, Christian, be of good comfort. ■


✍ **Rev Samuel Murray,**
Minister of Portavogie Free Presbyterian Church.



“THE ISRAELITES WERE WALKING IN OBEDIENCE. THEY WERE IN THE CENTRE OF GOD’S WILL; YET THEY WERE BEING PURSUED BY THEIR ENEMY.”

Mental Illness

What the Gospel has to say



Mental health disorders are increasingly common. A recent survey of young people in Northern Ireland (16-25yr old) revealed that two thirds say they often or always feel stressed, and one third go further and say that they often or always feel hopeless (Prince's Trust Survey April 2018). To cover all aspects of mental health in one short article seems an impossible task. The scope of mental health disorders is very broad, with anxiety at one end of the spectrum and depression, with hopelessness, at the other. The symptoms range also from being mild, where we admit to being unhappy; to severe, where the sufferers are suicidal or psychotic, requiring medical input from a doctor or psychiatrist. For too long, mental health has been a taboo subject with many, especially men, unwilling to admit that they have mental health problems, fearing that it is an admission of weakness of character. That is beginning to change with prominent members of our society speaking openly of their struggles.

In my profession, I meet many who feel they have exhausted their own ability to manage the problem and give in, often under duress, to make a visit to their doctor. They relay their symptoms, which are a tangle of mixed emotions, often with no simple cause. Is there a physical cause to their mental condition? Or is it psychological, or spiritual? Often there are features of all three.

The problem is more intense for the Christian. I hear some ask, "Shouldn't I be stronger?" "Is my faith too weak?" or, "Is it a sin to be anxious or depressed?" Sadly, some well-meaning Christians promote this view, but mental

*“What a Friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything
to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry everything
to God in prayer.”*

illness is a disease like any other; and, just as Christians are not exempt from infection or cancer, so they are not exempt from mental illness. Let us not add to people's distress by telling them they have a weak and failing faith. How cruel! All sickness and disease came into the world with Adam's fall. It is correct to say that disease exists because of sin. We need to be careful, though, not to ascribe all disease to personal sin. While we know that some disease results from sinful practices - we may think of liver cirrhosis in an alcoholic or lung cancer in those addicted to nicotine - it would be wrong to accuse all those who suffer of some great, unconfessed sin. This reminds me of Job, who is a remarkable case study of one who suffered "meltdown" due to spiritual, circumstantial and physical assaults. His comforters, who might be more aptly named accusers, argued that Job must have committed some awful sin for all his troubles to happen. But there was a higher good in God's sovereignty. Job's faith was refined like gold (Job 23:10), and his experiences have ultimately brought hope and comfort to many who suffer trials and loss.

Can we identify those who are more prone to mental health disorders, or are there particular circumstances to blame? These can be considered as internal or external factors. Internally, our physical health, the medication we take for other diseases, our hormones, our temperaments or a strong family history can all make us more prone to mental illness. Externally, life events, stress, over-working, bereavement or loss can have an adverse impact. The Christian is not immune to any of these and must become self-aware. Know your limitations, your weaknesses, your temperament and those temptations which cause you to fall into sin. Be sure that the devil knows them and will use them to bring us down. Be aware of his devices and resist him, and he will flee from you (James 4:7). We need the Spirit's help to do this, and we should note that part of the fruit He produces in the believer is temperance, which is moderation or self-control (Galatians 5:23). Certainly, we are less likely to fall into mental decline if we live a life of regularity and moderation. The Bible supports such a lifestyle for our physical, mental and spiritual benefit and as a means of glorifying God.

For those who do suffer, what can they do? They need to talk more – tell how they feel and not be afraid to speak about their struggles. Firstly, they should talk to the Lord in prayer, a means of grace often neglected. Secondly, speak to a good friend (someone who listens well, is discreet and talks little!); this friend needs to be sympathetic to your Christian viewpoint. Men are not to "hide behind the mask" (a recent advertising slogan for mental health services) as they often find it more difficult to speak of their feelings. This talking therapies approach (counselling and especially cognitive behavioural therapy) is widespread now and is available at most GP surgeries. But some have more severe illness, and they may require medication. There is a view

in some Christian circles that medication is wrong and that no Christian should take antidepressants, but is it wrong to take an antibiotic for tonsillitis? Why then is it wrong to take an antidepressant for a low mood or anxiolytic for those greatly distressed? It is true that many have become too dependent on medication in Northern Ireland, yet it remains a necessary treatment for the health care professional to use in some cases. For these individuals, there is no shame in taking medication for mental illness.

The mind is a finely balanced organ reflecting that rational part of our being – our thoughts, our beliefs, our intellect, our memory and our conscience. All can be upset if mental health deteriorates, leading some to think they are losing their minds. The word "mind" appears many times in Paul's letter to the church at Philippi. Paul presents the gospel as the ultimate source of joy in this short letter and also as the remedy for the troubled mind. "Like-mindedness" is presented as a remedy for strife in Philippians 4:2. We are to "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). His mind was one of lowliness, humility, obedience and sacrifice. Such a mind is devoid of pride, self-promotion and sinful disobedience.

This is contrary to the current culture, as much counselling today is based on promoting self-worth and self-esteem whereas Christians are to deny self and live unto Christ, the One who died and rose again to give us new life (1 Corinthians 5:15, 17). Rather than being conformed to this world, we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2). In Luke 24:36 onwards, we see the disciples in great distress. Confusion reigns, for they are receiving mixed messages. They believed their hopes had been dashed in the death of Jesus Christ. Their faith was being tested and all had failed, Peter most miserably with oaths and cursing. But Jesus asked, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" (Luke 24:38). Maybe that describes you: troubled, full of fear and doubt. Note how the Saviour responded to them. He promised peace (v. 36), revealed himself to them (v. 39), pointed them to the Scriptures (v. 44), promised them overcoming power (v. 49) and blessed them (v. 50). The result was an amazing transformation. The Lord Jesus Christ can do all this for us in our troubles, and in every circumstance. Philippians 4:7 provides a wonderful promise to God's people suffering emotional or mental illness. It presents Christ as the supplier of God's peace – a peace that the world knows nothing of, nor can it give, and a peace that no man can fully understand. This peace can keep (protect) both our hearts and minds. Praise be to God alone. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus". ■

✓ **Dr Nigel S Campbell**, is a GP in Lisburn and an elder in Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church.

Reflections on the Week of Prayer

During its October 2018 meeting in Barrie Free Presbyterian Church, Barrie, Ontario, Canada, the North American presbytery appointed two of its members as official delegates to the 2019 Week of Prayer in N. Ireland.

One of the delegates was Rev Derrick Bowman, associate minister of Grace FPC, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, who was making his first visit to the Ulster Week of Prayer. I was the other delegate. For me, it was my fifth visit to Ulster but my first time to attend the Week of Prayer since January 1985. After attending the Week of Prayer as a student in both 1984 and 1985, my other visits to Ulster came in November 2000 and June 2006 for the first meeting of the International Congress of Free Presbyterians. Thus, a hiatus of thirty-four years separated my second and third attendances at the Week of Prayer. During that lengthy period, the Week of Prayer (which took place for the first time in 1970) was bound to reflect changes that occurred over the years.

The 2019 Week of Prayer took place in the facilities of Corick House Hotel and Spa in Clogher in County Tyrone. Except for those who lived near the hotel and could commute to the daily sessions, most other men occupied rooms in the historic property whose core is a house that dates to the eighteenth century. The attendees enjoyed their meals in the hotel, and

the sessions of the Week of Prayer took place in a large conference room at one end of the building.

Under the direction of Rev Gordon Dane, moderator of the Ulster presbytery, the sessions began on Monday afternoon and continued each morning and afternoon until the concluding session on Friday morning. Different ministers were assigned to preach at each of the sessions, and the assignments included the American delegates.

From our arrival at Corick House on Monday afternoon, January 7, we experienced a warm welcome, both from those members of the Ulster presbytery whom we knew from the past and from those members and students who were too young for us to have met them before. There were repeated expressions of delight that we were there, and both Rev. Bowman and I found that experience continuing through the week. Several men said that they wanted us to feel at home and that we were among friends.

The aspects of the Week of Prayer that remained as I remembered them were the warm fellowship at meal times and



on other informal occasions, the serious conversations about various situations of mutual concern, and above all, the consistent preaching of the Word of God. The refreshing aspects of the Week, in addition to the preaching, were the periods of singing and the energetic and ongoing prayer times, when even some of the college students participated in beseeching the Throne of Grace.

One striking feature of the Week of Prayer was the presbytery's annual Communion service for all the ministers, elders, and students who were present. This year's service took place in Clogher Valley Free Presbyterian Church where Rev Peter McIntyre is the minister. Rev Dane presided at the service, and Rev John Armstrong, deputy moderator, preached the Word. This addition to the schedule for the week began in more recent years and provided an impetus to underscore the importance of unity among the brethren in addition to focusing our attention on the sacrifice of Christ near the outset of the week.



Because the presbytery held its meeting on the previous Friday evening, which Rev. Bowman attended while I was still traveling, there was no need for presbytery business during the week. At least one of the committees, however, did meet during one of the evenings.

On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings, Rev. Bowman and I traveled away from Corick House to speak in prayer meetings at Dungannon, Moneyslane, Sixmilecross, Magherafelt, and Crossgar. On the Lord's Days, I visited Kilkeel, Newtownabbey, Ballymena, and Omagh. Rev. Bowman visited Dungannon, Crossgar, Clogher Valley, and Ballymena. These visits to the churches were a crucial part of the purpose for attending the Week of Prayer, and that purpose was to strengthen the fraternal ties that exist between the Free Presbyterian Church of North America and the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster.

As in past visits, I found the people in the various congregations very friendly and displaying even greater interest

in the work of the North American church than before. As I sought to assure them of our high regard, I also expressed our appreciation for the faithful prayer support the North American churches have received from the churches in the Ulster presbytery. In particular, both Rev Bowman and I expressed appreciation for the faithful prayers of the brethren for the recovery of Dr Mark Allison

from the serious illness he is battling. Some members broke down in tears as they prayed for him.

As we relaxed each night in the comfortable surroundings of Corick House, we had occasion to reflect on the reality that the FPCNA and the FPC of Ulster are very close members of the worldwide Free Presbyterian family. When added to the blessing still fresh in our memories of the fourth meeting of the International Congress of Free Presbyterians last summer in Pennsylvania, USA, the 2019 Ulster Week of Prayer bolstered our love and affection for our brethren in Ulster.

The Week of Prayer reinforced the reality that there is no divergence in either presbytery from the things that have marked Free Presbyterianism from its inception, including its distinctives and its separatism. The Ulster brethren remain committed to the exhortation to stand with Christ outside the camp, bearing His reproach. Visiting the Week of Prayer at the beginning of 2019 left me encouraged that there is a strong bond of affection that exists between the two denominations, and this encouragement compels us to increase our communication and our cooperation in the days ahead. ■

✍ **Rev David G. Mook,**
is the minister of Phoenix Free Presbyterian Church, Arizona and the clerk of the Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America.



New elders ordained and installed in Portglenone Free Presbyterian Church

Mr. Melvyn Marshall and Mr. Alan Murphy were ordained and installed as elders in Portglenone Free Presbyterian Church on 9th December 2018. Rev J Greer (Clerk of Presbytery) asked the prescribed questions and Rev G Dane (Moderator) preached the charge from 1 Peter 5:1-4.



Front row: Rev D Stewart, Mr. A Murphy, Mr. M Marshall, Rev G Dane
Back row: Rev J Greer, Mr. W Brown, Mr. S Logan, Rev D Linden.

Bushmills Free Presbyterian Church



On Sunday 23rd December, 2018, tributes were paid and a presentation made to Mrs. Hannah Catherwood who has stepped down after almost twenty years service as a dedicated and faithful Sunday School teacher in Bushmills Church. Hannah is pictured with her husband Robert (Sunday School Superintendent), two of the many children she has taught over the years, Ella McKay and Anna McCurdy, and the current serving minister, Rev R McLernon.

Portavogie Congregation marks 30th Anniversary of Minister's Ordination

On 6th January 2019, the congregation of Portavogie Free Presbyterian marked the 30th Anniversary of the ordination of Rev S Murray to the Christian ministry. Rev Murray is pictured with his wife Karen.



Markethill Free Presbyterian Church Sunday School Presentations

Mr. Wilbur McMullan (Sunday School Superintendent) is pictured congratulating Lydia Burke, Ella Irvine and Anna Liggett, who attend Markethill Free Presbyterian Church Sunday School. The girls recited the entire Child's Catechism and received a certificate to mark their achievement at the recent Sunday School prize giving in the Church.



Gilford Sunday School Awards

David Wallace and Ethan Brown from Gilford Free Presbyterian Church Sunday School recently received certificates of achievement for passing the Child's Catechism exam. They are pictured with Rev G McCammon and Mrs Maureen King (Sunday School teacher).



Lisburn Presentations

On 9th December 2018 Mr Eric Graham (Clerk of Session of Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church) presented Rev T Martin with a suitably inscribed watch to mark the 20th Anniversary of his ordination to the Christian ministry and also his installation as minister of Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church. Dr J Douglas (Senior Minister) presented Mrs June Martin with a bouquet of flowers and gift vouchers.



Mourne Independent Christian School Pupil Presentation



Lydia Morrison from Mourne Independent Christian School achieved top marks (100%) in GCSE Further Maths. She received a special award from CCEA at an award ceremony hosted at Titanic Belfast. Lydia is pictured (centre) with her Maths teacher (second from right) and co-principals.



"THE DISCIPLE IS
NOT ABOVE HIS
MASTER: BUT
EVERYONE THAT IS
PERFECT SHALL BE
AS HIS MASTER."

Luke 6:40

Taking Care of Planet Earth

There is an understanding that the choices we make have an impact on the environment around us. We are responsible for the world we live in. This responsibility has a biblical dimension because, in Genesis 1:26, God gave Adam "dominion" over all living things on earth. Adam was given special training for the job. In Genesis 1:29 God explained how plant life grew and developed thus making Adam a qualified horticulturist. In Genesis 1:30 God made Adam aware of all the delicate balances in nature, making him an environmentalist. Adam's training was widened to include zoology when, in Genesis 2:20 God gave him the task of naming all the animals.

However, the big question is, "Did Adam and his successors (us) continue as good stewards of God's creation?" Well, let's look at the results. Today, some oceans are over-fished; many watercourses are contaminated with waste and rubbish; certain animals have been hunted to extinction; vast areas of rainforest have been hacked down and various types of open

cast mining have left landscapes scarred and blighted. In short, mankind has failed. Man's failure to act responsibly as a steward over all things can be traced back to Adam and Eve's sin against God. The root of the problem is found in the heart of man. Man is driven by the sinful desires of his heart. As a result, most of the damage seen in today's environment is due to the greed and wastefulness of sinful men.

How do we begin to address all these difficulties? How do we once again become good stewards and take care of the wonderful gift of God's creation? God's Word has the answer. If our hearts are right then we will seek to do what is right. How does such a change come about? We must confess our wrongdoing before God and trust the Saviour for salvation. The new birth means that we are made new creatures in Christ. Only then will we be true co-workers with God, not just in creation and in looking after the environment around us, but in every part of our lives and especially in the winning of others onto Him?



QUIZ

BELOW IS A QUOTATION FROM PSALM 115.

To find out which verse it is, you need to remove all the colours and shapes to reveal the verse.

Then check down through Psalm 115 to find out which of the verses it actually is.

That verse number will be the answer to the quiz.



The round blue heaven, triangle even the brown golden heavens, are square the LORD'S: black orange but the earth green star hath red He given hexagon to white oval purple the children oblong of men cube.

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

- » Lydia Moore (Ballynahinch FPC)
- » Cameron Smyth (Randalstown FPC)
- » Andrew McVeigh (Sandown FPC)
- » Anna Liggett (Markethill FPC)
- » Benjamin Cully (Portavogie FPC)
- » Rachel Harbinson (Aghalee FPC)
- » Anna Smyth (Merthyr Tydfil FPC)
- » Joshua Hylands (Comber FPC)

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CHURCH:

Advice that Abides

Proverbs is a book all about wisdom. It is full of little statements of wise truths and good counsel on just about every aspect of life. In the opening verses of this book, we see this theme of wisdom being brought out to us, "To know wisdom and instruction..." (Proverbs 1:2).

In many ways, Proverbs is a guide book for life. It is a manual for living. It presents the words of wisdom and then applies that wisdom in our daily lives. Probably, the best-known verses in this book are the words, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5, 6). These verses stand out as bright and guiding lights. As a young person you will receive many words of advice but here is advice that never dates. It is advice that abides. Wherever you go in life, pray for grace to apply these words to every situation.

The **essence** of this advice is found in the opening phrase, "Trust in the LORD". The key to this entire passage of Scripture is summed up in that one phrase. As we face life-changing situations and are forced to make decisions regarding the direction we take in life, we should do so trusting in the Lord. But what does this mean? It means acknowledging

our lack of wisdom and our need for His grace and guidance. We should never make decisions based merely on what we feel to be right, rather, we should ask the Lord to guide us. He knows the best way for us, even if that way is different from our way. His ways are best and, as He has planned the way, we can trust Him.

The **entirety** of this advice is captured by the phrase, "in all thy ways." This advice is applicable to every part of life - to every decision that we will make and to everything that we will do. We must not think that there are matters too insignificant or too minor to bring before God. He means what He says when He counsels us to acknowledge Him in all our ways, and note, we are to do so wholeheartedly. There is no need to be half-hearted before God.

The **experience** of those who follow this advice is described by the words,

"He shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). What a blessed experience to know the Lord directing our paths. It literally can be read that, 'He will make a pathway for you.' He will make a way for you. He will remove all those obstacles. He will make the pathway smooth and straight.

Whenever we submit our lives wholly and totally to the Lord and seek His will in all things we can expect God to open up the way before us. He will go with us, step by step, little by little, day by day, directing our paths.

This truly is advice that will never go out of date. It is advice that needs to be heeded and put into practice in our lives. ■

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

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5, 6

The CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

The 20th century gave rise to a movement which has had an enormous impact on the Christian church. The Charismatic Movement placed emphasis on a supposed rediscovery and manifestation of signs and wonders (tongues, healings, prophesy and “new” revelation). It has been embraced by many mainstream denominations outside of traditional Pentecostalism, including the Roman Catholic Church. The medium of radio, television and mainstream Christian literature have served to bring the phenomenon to the masses and brought people like Kathryn Kuhlman, Robert Schuller, Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn and John Wimber into the spotlight. To test whether

the Charismatic movement is authentic or not, we must turn to Scripture. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20).

THE HISTORY OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

The Charismatic Movement claims to be a return to the Pentecostal Christianity of the first century. Since the close of the New Testament, the church fathers, preachers, theologians, evangelists and missionaries did not lay claim to the charismatic phenomenon.

During the 1800s several men arose within traditional churches who evidenced charismatic tendencies. Edward Irving, a Scottish Presbyterian, was one such

“A CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF SCRIPTURE WILL LEAD ANY HONEST STUDENT TO CONCLUDE THAT THE EXERCISING OF MIRACULOUS GIFTS CEASED WITH THE COMPLETION OF SCRIPTURE.”

person. However, the beliefs such men held were neither welcomed nor embraced by sound evangelicals. By the 20th Century more men were emerging in Britain and America who believed the Pentecostal gifts were still to be experienced by Christians. Some of these people were undoubtedly good men who held to the fundamental tenets of the gospel; men such as George and Stephen Jeffries and the revivalist Evan Roberts. Others like Smith Wigglesworth and W J Seymour of Los Angeles, were much more extreme in their Pentecostal beliefs.

The Charismatic Movement, as we know it today, came to the fore in 1959 when a 42year-old Episcopalian minister in Van Nuys, California claimed he had been baptised with the Holy Spirit and had started to speak in a heavenly tongue. His claims received newspaper and television coverage and his church became a talking point. Others from within mainstream denominations quickly began making similar claims. A new 'experience' had come to the fore which could be enjoyed by all under the umbrella of Christendom. Liberals, evangelicals and Catholics claimed they had found a common ground that transcended their doctrinal differences.

THE CLAIMS OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

The Charismatic Movement claims to be a rediscovery of apostolic Christianity; a renewal of the apostolic gifts; a revival of the work of the Holy Spirit and a revelation from God, through the church, to the world at large. A careful examination of scripture will lead any honest student to conclude that the exercising of miraculous gifts ceased with the completion of Scripture. Those who had the ability to heal, speak suddenly with other tongues (foreign languages) and prophesy, *were either the apostles themselves or those whom the apostles directly laid hands on*. There is no evidence that the gifts continued among succeeding generations.

It is also clear from the New Testament, that the office of the

apostle was temporary. Paul indicates that he was the last apostle (1 Corinthians 15:8). Apostles were personally appointed by Christ Himself (Luke 6:13) and were also eyewitnesses to the resurrected Saviour (Acts 1:22, 25). To claim apostleship in this day is a big claim indeed!

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MOVEMENT

Elevating the extravagant

Something more than the Bible is always desirable within the Charismatic Movement. Supposed signs and wonders become the preeminent feature. Speaking with tongues, mass healings, prophesying and dreams and visions all feature prominently.

Exciting the emotions

Emotions can be stirred up easily through the medium of lively praise (Charismatic worship is usually lengthy, repetitive and void of hymns that are explicit in their theology). Emotions can also be 'whipped up' with spurious prophesying. "*God told me*", is a common phrase among charismatics. The thought of getting a direct message from God, outside of the Bible, is appealing to many. Emotions can also be excited by flippant promises. Often, the faithful adherent is assured of financial wealth and perfect health.

Emphasising experience

Experience generally takes the place of doctrine in the Charismatic Movement. Often when the charismatic is challenged about their beliefs it will be discovered that the acid test of truth is an experience rather than the Word of God. A common experience can easily unite people from all sorts of religious background. God, however, has "*magnified His word above His name*" (Psalm 138:2) and all experience must be taken to the Scriptures.

Embracing error

Many of the charismatic churches have a very superficial statement of faith. Their theology is often elementary and non-discriminating. Ambiguity makes

“SEEK TO EXPERIENCE THE FULLNESS OF GOD IN A BIBLICAL WAY. ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE NEW BIRTH; THAT YOU ARE GROWING IN GRACE AND THAT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS BEING CULTIVATED IN YOU.”

it easy for those young in the faith or uneducated in doctrine to embrace the Charismatic Movement. The Bible always places emphasis on sound theology (1 Timothy 4:13, 16; 5:17; Titus 2:1, 7).

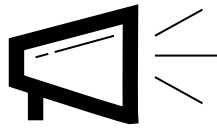
Endorsing ecumenism

Charismatic leader David DuPlessis said, "*to be truly charismatic you must be ecumenical, and to be truly ecumenical you must be charismatic*." Consequently, the break with Rome caused by the Reformation is either lamented or seen as an inconvenient misunderstanding. The Charismatic Movement seeks to bridge the theological gap between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.

RESPONDING TO THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

Our response to the Charismatic should be at least three-fold. (1) Get back to the Bible. Our Lord Jesus Christ exhorted us to "search the scriptures" (John 5:39). This will take time and effort. (2) Be sound in doctrine. "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me" (2 Timothy 1:13). We must not abandon the faith once delivered unto the saints. (3) Seek to experience the fullness of God in a biblical way. Ensure that you have the experience of the new birth; that you are growing in grace and that the fruit of the Spirit is being cultivated in you. Endeavour to get to know God more in prayer; obey Him and seek diligently to be filled with the Holy Ghost in order that you may enjoy God and serve Him honourably and effectively. ■

✉ **Rev Roger Higginson,**
minister of Coleraine Free Presbyterian Church.



YOUTH COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

YOUTH COUNCIL MISSION TRIPS 2019

LIBERIA
CHILDREN'S OUTREACH
July 22 - Aug 3, Age: 18+
Max. 8 places
Cost £1355 approx. (£255 + flights)

LIVERPOOL
OUTREACH
July 20 - 27, Age: 18+
Max. 10 places
Cost £255 (subsidised up to 45%)

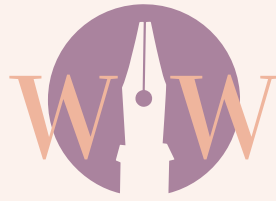
LIMAVADY
CHILDREN'S OUTREACH
Aug 12 - 18, Age: 16+
Max. 10 places
Cost £125 (subsidised up to 45%)
Non-residential cost £50 +

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

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCYOUTH.ORG



A Word to Women

Dorcas

ACTS 9:36-43

Dorcas or Tabitha lived in Joppa, on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. We are given a glimpse of this talented seamstress so that we may learn from her.

Dorcas was a “disciple”. Literally, she was a learner or follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has appointed different roles for men and women in the church but, in salvation, “there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:8). We do not know when Dorcas became a disciple but she was part of her local church, having been converted and showing forth the fruits of salvation in her life. Every Christian is a disciple and should be ever learning and following on to know the Lord.

Dorcas was “full of good works and almsdeeds”. Dorcas used her natural abilities and gifts to serve the Lord. She paid particular attention to the widows, using her needlework skills to provide clothing for those in great need. She was a woman of means but she did not use that as an excuse to avoid associating with those who were experiencing hard times, nor did she simply give money and let others do the work. Many today are involved in commendable charity work but only those motivated by the love of Christ in their hearts can expect an eternal reward. “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Hebrews 6:10).

Dorcas was not exempt from sickness and death despite the useful work that she was engaged in. Some godly saints have died when they seem at their most useful in God’s work. Ina Orr was only 29 years of age and still on the boat taking her up the Amazon River to begin work as a missionary in Brazil when a fever took her life in 1954. We know Ina’s death had a profound effect on the Christians back in Belfast, including

a young Bill Woods. Although we cannot always understand the, “Why”, nothing happens randomly and the Lord has a greater plan hence we pray, “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

Dorcas was greatly mourned. No false eulogies were needed. Dorcas was greatly loved and her death left an unfillable gap. With great care, those who benefitted from Dorcas’ service, washed her body but did not bury it as would have been the norm. Instead, an urgent message was sent to Peter to come immediately.

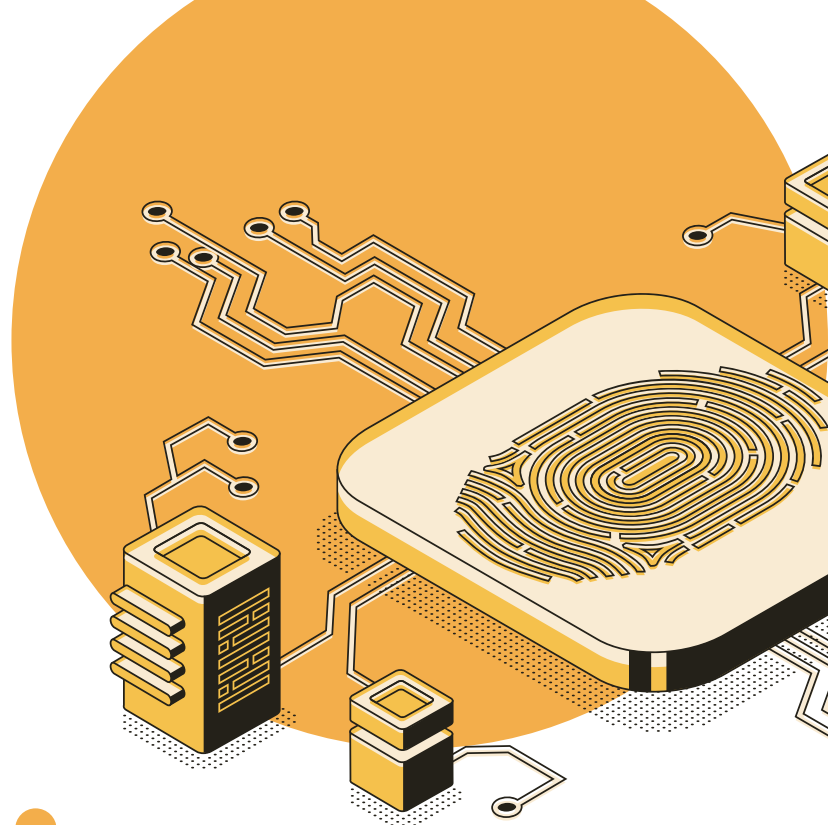
“Dorcas used her natural abilities and gifts to serve the Lord... She was a woman of means but she did not use that as an excuse to avoid associating with those who were experiencing hard times.”

Dorcas was raised to continue her selfless service. The early New Testament Church had seen many miraculous healings but there was no precedent for the raising of the dead. Peter cleared the room where Dorcas lay and then knelt and prayed. Sure that God had answered, he turned to the corpse and spoke saying, “Tabitha (Dorcas), arise” (Acts 9:40). Dorcas’ lifeless body responded and Peter was able to present her alive to the mourners. Tears of sorrow were replaced with tears of joy. The community also was stirred and many brought to faith in the Lord.

Let us serve like Dorcas, using the skills and talents given us to the glory of God. When we do even the most mundane of jobs, as to the Lord, we are sure of God’s blessing. In Romans 12 and again in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul speaks of the Church as a body. As the body is made up of different organs working together to be healthy, so all in the church, working in harmony, make for a strong and vibrant church. ■

✍ **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.



The Christian and the Internet

We are slowly learning. Instead of spending one frustrated hour after another stubbornly trying but spectacularly failing to locate something on the world wide web – just ask the kids! Truth is, our children today are fully part of the digital generation while we, their parents, lag embarrassingly far behind. The youngest of them are as comfortable with iPads as we are with a paperback and have only ever known a world where almost everyone has a mobile phone semi-permanently glued to their hand, where Facebook is a teenager’s rite-of-passage, and where every home has five or ten or twenty devices that can access the rest of the world through the Internet.

Yet we do know of the dangers that are lurking out there, waiting to draw us in. Too many horror stories have been reported by the media for us to remain in ignorance. And we have enough personal experience to realise that copious amounts of perverse material are only a click or two away.

Naturally, we wish to protect our children, and ourselves, in an environment like this. But we want to do more than

that. A crucial part of our calling as a parent requires us to teach our children to live virtuously and to use these new technologies for good purposes instead of bad ones.

BROWSERS AND ARCHIVES

We are inclined to view the internet as a huge library – a place where diverse viewpoints are housed, an area where people can browse in search of answers and in a quest for knowledge, a venue where ideas are not censored and readers may sift through the archives with the exercise of a little discernment.

However, the internet is not a library. While a library is a highly curated collection of knowledge, carefully selected and organised by professionals with relevant expertise, the internet is no such place.

As Kevin DeYoung points out, “At best, the internet is like a wild forest. No one controls it. No one manicures it. It just grows and grows. And in the forest, you’ll find plenty of beauty. But be careful, eat the wrong mushrooms and you could die.



At worst, the internet is like a wide-open garbage dump. Every day people dump more and more onto the pile. Sure you may be able to find something valuable, but you'll have to wade through a lot of trash first."

As a minister, I definitely discover many helpful resources on the internet, even some old volumes that, due to their rarity and expense, I could never hope to procure for my own library. School children may find many valuable helps and hints for projects. But each of us must take great care that we avoid the 'mushrooms' in the murkiness, for these are potentially fatal.

FILTERS AND FIREWALLS

Rather than rely on our own desire or determination not to poke about in the piles of trash (cf. Romans 7:14-25), it is advisable that we use the software that is available to erect a firewall against unwanted traffic and filter out a very high percentage of the undesirable content.

One blogger has posted online details of 'The Porn-Free Family Plan' that will prove beneficial to all. The plan is plain: "In all of this, there are two broad goals: To prevent those who want to find pornography and to protect those who do not want to find it but who may otherwise find themselves exposed to it, to confound those who want to see porn and to shield those who don't. And while the plan is geared specifically to combat pornography, it will also help battle other online dangers."

Patience and a price are involved in this, but our Saviour's warning finds traction right here: "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" This is an area about which we really need to count the cost (Mark 8:34-38; Philippians 4:8-9).

MALWARE AND VIRUSES

When Josh McDowell delivers his talk, 'Unshakeable Truth, Relevant Faith,' he tends to ask the question, "What has changed everything?" He has in mind the most uncomfortable fact that young Christians today are rejecting Biblical fundamentalism – and doctrinaire concepts such as absolute truth and the infallibility of Scripture – in droves. Why is faith in God being supplanted, earlier and earlier, by relativism, secularism and scepticism? McDowell's answer is simple: the Internet.

Atheists tend to agree with him. A post on 'Unreasonable Faith' (a website designed to counter William Lane Craig's book and online community dubbed 'Reasonable Faith') surmised that the Internet was crucial to the success of the "New Atheists." The usual taunt emanating from the camp of the infidels runs

like this: "You Christians can't survive in the marketplace of ideas. You find that your faith doesn't stack up."

But this is not the issue. The Internet may be helping to facilitate major crises in the minds of our evangelical youth, but it is not because of an "abundance of information" that challenges their faith. Rather, it is because the place where they spend much of their lives is where those who have rejected God often control the discourse. It is safe to say the majority of voices they encounter in web forums, blogs and Facebook timelines will not echo those heard in their church porch.

ROUTERS AND HASHTAGS

Will the Internet kill evangelical Christianity? Are we on the verge of collapse? Is our influence about to implode from the inside? Dire warnings of this type have been issued for many years. One such article stated, "I believe that we are on the verge – within ten years – of a major collapse of evangelical Christianity; a collapse that will follow the deterioration of the mainline Protestant world and that will fundamentally alter the religious and cultural environment in the West. I believe this evangelical collapse will happen with astonishing statistical speed."

Predictions like these drive secular people to false optimism and Christians to false pessimism. However, the ten-year span for that prediction was reached in 2019 – and the stats may be surprising. Numerically, there are more evangelicals in the West today than at any time in our history, while in the East the Gospel of Christ is significantly increasing. Surely it is time to ditch man's old faithless predictions of imminent demise and rather 'hashtag' our Saviour's promise, "I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18)?

I find it encouraging that many churches have awakened to the value of harnessing the Internet to a gospel advantage. Just as a network router connects two or more computers to an internet connection, allowing multiple users to access the internet and move data between connected computing devices, so biblical blogs and church websites are being used to spread the message about the Lord Jesus Christ in their own vicinity and all around the world.

See o'er the world, wide open doors inviting:
Soldiers of Christ, arise and enter in!
Christians, awake! your forces all uniting,
Send forth the Gospel, break the chains of sin.

God speed the day, when those of every nation
"Glory to God!" triumphantly shall sing;
Ransomed, redeemed, rejoicing in salvation,
Shout Hallelujah, for the Lord is King. ■

✍ **Rev Ian Brown**

*minister of Martyrs Memorial Free Presbyterian Church,
Belfast.*



A Tribute to

Rev Dr Kenneth Elliott

It was with immense shock and sorrow that we learned of Dr Kenneth Elliott's home call on Saturday 19th January 2019. After his conversion in 1961 and his marriage to Jean in 1966, Rev Elliott entered into full-time Christian work with the Belfast City Mission. While in Belfast he came under the ministry of Dr Paisley and became convinced of the Free Presbyterian position on ecclesiastical separation. A successful application to study for the ministry of the Free Presbyterian Church led to student placement in Omagh. However, upon completion of his studies in the Theological Hall, he accepted a call to the congregation in Portadown during the autumn of 1973. For the next 43 years, he exercised a faithful, God honouring and soul-saving ministry in County Armagh.

Under his ministry, the congregation began to grow and enjoyed the evident blessing of God. In 1974 a site in Levaghery Gardens was purchased and the original church building was erected. That was quickly followed by the Sabbath School Complex which was added to the back of the church. At one

point there were 400 children on the annual Sunday School roll. The 1970s and 1980s were marked by evangelism and great soul winning missions when dozens of individuals were counselled and pointed to Christ. Many of the older generation in Bethany can point to those missions as the time of their conversion. Many missions live on in the minds of the congregation, as times of refreshing from the Lord. In 1988, under the guidance of Dr Elliott, Bethany Free Presbyterian Church commenced a Christian day school, providing independent Christian education at nursery, primary and secondary level. For 26 years Dr Elliott faithfully executed the duties of School Administrator. In 2005 the church building was renovated and enlarged and in 2012 a new school building was opened.

His ministry in Portadown can be summarised in the following way. For 43 years Rev Elliott protested against error; proclaimed the truth of God's word; pitied the lost; pointed men to Jesus Christ; pastored God's people; pioneered a separated church and prayed without ceasing.

The congregation of Bethany Free Presbyterian Church will ever be indebted to God for Rev Elliott's ministry.

As well as his work in Portadown, Dr Elliott served the Lord in various ways in the Presbytery. Most notably, he lectured in the Whitefield College of the Bible from its inception and in 1999 was honoured to succeed Dr S B Cooke as the professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, a position he held until his passing. For many years he chaired the Forward Movement Committee as well as serving on the Education Board and Book of Order Committee. For two years he had the privilege of serving as deputy moderator. In recent years he served as the interim moderator of Lurgan Free Presbyterian Church. The General Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster and the congregation of Bethany record thanks to God for the life and ministry of Dr Kenneth Elliott and to his sorrowing family extend their deepest Christian sympathy. 2 Timothy 4:7-8 sums up his Christian life, death and eternity, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day." ■

“The General Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster and the congregation of Bethany record thanks to God for the life and ministry of Dr Kenneth Elliott and to his sorrowing family extend their deepest Christian sympathy.”

✍ **Rev D Abernethy,**
minister of Bethany Free Presbyterian Church, Portadown.



FREE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF ULSTER

EASTER CONVENTION

MARTYRS MEMORIAL FREE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH, BELFAST



FRIDAY 19, 8PM MISSIONARY & YOUTH FOCUS



PREACHER:
MR CHRIS KILLEN

INSIGHT INTO MISSION FIELDS AT HOME & ABROAD

Mainland: Rev David Smith

Nepal: Rev Wesley Graham

Kenya: Mr & Mrs David & Rachael McAuley

Czech Republic: Milos Solc

Special singing: Whitefield Choir

Supper will be served after this meeting

MONDAY 22 3.30PM



PREACHER:
REV G DANE

7PM



PREACHER: REV
J ARMSTRONG

REPORTS

Spain: Lyle Boyd
(including tribute to John Hanna)

Video Presentation:
Henry Cooke Centenary

Special singing:
United Choir, Rev W McCrea

REPORTS

FPC Christian Schools:
Rev Brian McClung

Consider Christ: Rev James Porter

Missionary Council: Rev David Park

Special singing: Ballymoney Choir,
Christian School choir



*Tea & coffee will be served on the Monday between services
Children's club will be available for children during the Monday services*

Miss Noreen McAfee Returns to Uganda



The 51st Annual Hebron Missionary Weekend took place in Ballymoney Free Presbyterian Church during the second weekend in January. As in previous years, there was a full programme setting forth the various needs of our Free Presbyterian missionaries. Rev David Brown (Larne) was the guest preacher over the weekend and was greatly helped in the ministry of God's Word.

During the Friday evening meeting, the Mission Board conducted the sending forth service for Miss Noreen McAfee, as she prepared to return to Uganda. This was particularly appropriate as Miss McAfee is a member of the Hebron congregation. Mission Board treasurer, Mr Alastair Hamilton, made a presentation to Noreen on behalf of the Board, wishing her God's blessing in her next term of service. Miss McAfee was able to respond and thank everyone for their support and presence in the service. Rev Harris (Chairman of the Mission Board), invited all the Members of the Mission Board who were present together with the Members of Presbytery to

join him in the pulpit. The congregation was asked to stand, and God was sought in prayer for the work and witness of Miss McAfee in the Emmanuel Christian School. Prayer was also made for Noreen's mother and family members whom she leaves behind as she returns to Uganda. The closing words of the final hymn summarized a tremendous evening together in God's presence;

*“So, send I
you, to bear
My cross with
patience, And
then one day
with joy to lay it
down...”*

*So, send I you, to bear My cross with patience,
And then one day with joy to lay it down,
To hear My voice; Well done, My faithful servant,
Come, share My throne, My Kingdom and My crown!*

Please remember Miss McAfee in prayer as she settles back into her role as Principal of Emmanuel Christian School, and that in her many duties and responsibilities she will know the help and grace of God. ■

✍ **Rev I Harris,**
Chairman of Mission Board.

Introducing Kenyan Christian Workers: Patrice Akali and Andrew Cheptoo



Patrice Akali was born in the Kakamega area to a Christian family and left there when he completed school and went to Nairobi to find work. While in Nairobi, he received Christ as his Saviour and began to serve the Lord and seek God's will for his life. He trained for the ministry in East Africa Bible College and later came into contact with the Free Presbyterian Missionary Society of Africa through Dr John McKnight, who organises the Pastor's Conferences each year in Kenya. On being appointed by the Mission Board to work as an evangelist in Kakamega based at the Beulah Bookshop, he and his family relocated from Nairobi to an apartment just outside Kakamega. His wife Gladys worked for many years in the Scripture Union Bookshop in Nairobi. He has two sons, Bernard and Gaius. In addition to serving in the bookshop one day a week and teaching in the Bible Study held there on Tuesdays, Patrice also sets up a book-table in a park in the centre of Kakamega. Through this ministry he has had many good contacts, some of which have commenced attending the Bible Study. On Saturdays, he and others from the church go on outreach in the Nyaporo area; and, on Sundays, he preaches either in Nyaporo or Bikeke and takes the prayer meeting in Nyaporo. Recently, he has testified and preached for the LTBS radio broadcasts. ■

Andrew Cheptoo is from a Roman Catholic background; therefore, he did not hear the gospel from an early age. However, he received a gospel tract, and, through other circumstances, he was gloriously brought to Christ. Andrew trained for the ministry at the Bible Christian Faith Church Bible College and served the Lord in the Moi's Bridge Church. He is married to Mercy and they have two sons, Jayden and Timothy. He completed his Masters in Theology degree through the Geneva Reformed Seminary and graduated last summer. He applied to and was accepted by the Mission Board to work as a pastor with Free Presbyterian Missionary Society of Africa. As he lives in the Bikeke/Kitale area, he ministers to the little congregation in Bikeke. He regularly does outreach around the homes of that area and has recently commenced a book-table ministry in Bikeke and Sibanga. He and Patrice have organised conferences for adults, young people and a Vacation Bible School in both Nyaporo and Bikeke. His wife Mercy assisted with the VBS and has helped in translation work of the Discipleship Course. Andrew teaches the Discipleship Course in Bikeke. He also has recorded programmes for LTBS. ■



Please pray for both these men and their families that the Lord would be pleased to bless them and use them both for the extension of God's Kingdom in the land of Kenya.

Report from Angel Alvarez: missionary in Spain



We are about to take a big step as a congregation. We have just purchased a new building for our worship services and church meetings, which is double the size of what we actually have. We hope the refurbishment of the new building will be finished by the end of March. There are four new families attending the morning services on the Lord's Day on a regular basis, and we also have some other new believers who have started attending the services. All this growth is one more confirmation from the Lord that it is time for us to move to a larger site. This year, we have started a seminary in our own congregation. We have already lectured on two subjects – Introduction to Theology and Primitive History (the first eleven chapters in Genesis). We have face-to-face classes and broadcast via

internet at the same time. We will continue with our third subject in January, which will be Introduction to Systematic Theology. I continue to give discipleship studies to all those who want to become members in the congregation and do not have a good doctrinal foundation. I am presently giving classes to a man called Carlos. There is also a lady who has started attending the services and who wants to go through our discipleship studies to become a member of the church.

We have great news to share with you. Some weeks ago, Rev John Hanna told me that my mom talked to him because she wanted to be a member of our congregation, making profession of faith in the church. Thank you for your prayers and support for the work in Alcorcon. ■



Letter from Rev Lyle Boyd



When the Lord transformed my life and filled my heart with the deep joy of sins forgiven forty-two years ago, I knew deep down that I could not just sit at ease in Zion and live for myself. The joy of this salvation was too great and wonderful to keep to myself. The whole world needed to know this. I prayed, “Lord, show the way, and I will follow.” Having been in Kenya, visiting my uncle and aunt who were missionaries working among the Turkana tribe, and seeing the shining faces of the believers who were once enslaved in pagan darkness, I believed that this was what the Lord would want me to do, to spread this same message to needy lost souls. However, after Bible training in the Whitefield College of the Bible, I had no clear leading of the place where the Lord would have me to go. I had not considered Spain. But by the grace of God, He led my wife Heather and I to Spain thirty-three years ago. After all these years, I can truly say what a blessing it was to have been brought up in a God-fearing home, in a once God-fearing country with a strong gospel influence. In contrast, Spain was a darkened land where fear and suspicion were installed deep in the hearts of the people and where mistrust and deception were rife. Many cannot even trust their own family members, much less a Protestant missionary.

In spite of the prejudice against us, we have laboured on, sowing the good seed of the Word of God among the lost by means of the book table in the local markets. Please pray for Emilio who enjoys talking about the things of God, and for his wife who is so indifferent and greatly influenced by the different philosophies of our time.

The radio programs continue from Monday to Friday, reaching a vast area. Pray that the Lord would use these programs to open the hearts and minds of the people. The yearly daily reading books have once again been distributed to family, friends and contacts in the area.

Remember also for our small congregation as we continue to preach the gospel and encourage them to reach out to their family and friends to show them the great and Almighty God that we adore. After all these years, things have not gotten any easier. In spite of having a very encouraging visit from young people, mostly from our Kilkeel congregation, who helped with tract distribution, this past year could be classed as one of the most difficult and trying in our service for the Lord for various reasons. We almost lost José Antonio to a serious illness in April. I believe the Lord graciously spared him, for both our encouragement and benefit in the work. I personally lost two aunts and my younger sister.

On Sunday past, we buried Eusebio, an old faithful founding member who served for many years as a deacon in our church. He will be greatly missed. We have only his wife Pilar, who is 83 years old, and his brother Alfonso, who is 97 years old, left of the original congregation when we first moved from Madrid. In Spain, they bury the deceased the day after they die. Eusebio passed away on Saturday, 12th of January, at six in the evening, and the funeral was held on Sunday at 4.00pm.

However, even though it was difficult, it was a blessing to have the opportunity

to preach to so many who had never heard the message of the gospel before. The room was packed to capacity, and although there was background noise of people chatting in the street outside, a pin could have been heard dropping as the Word was preached from the text: “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord” (Revelation 14:13). Please pray with us that lasting fruit would come from it. Especially pray for a particular man who has been witnessed to on various occasions in the past, and who had many years before confessed to have been emotionally affected after listening to a radio message. At five o’clock on the Sunday morning of the funeral, he was looking for Alfonso, who had passed the night with the grieving family. He had seen in Alfonso a man who had such a security of his eternal destination and wanted to hear him speak of that assurance again.

Please also pray for our upcoming deputation meetings in March and April in Ulster. Spain needs the prayers of God’s people. I fear that because Spain is a European country and a place where many enjoy taking their summer holidays, it does not strike many as a needy mission field. But, alas, it has been cursed by the false religion of Rome for centuries, a religion that stamped out the influence of the Protestant Reformation by the cruel inquisition. Only God can open these blinded eyes and change this situation. Pray also for our congregation that the Lord would keep and guide them during the two months that we will be absent. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have supported us both prayerfully and practically, making it possible for us to be here. May the Lord richly bless and encourage you in 2019.

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come”. Matthew 24:14. ■

✉ **Rev Lyle Boyd,**
missionary to Spain.

Report from Australia



☒ **Top:** members of Lock Free Presbyterian Church ministering in a care home.
Above: young people from Port Lincoln Free Presbyterian Church at the prize-giving service.

The spiritual climate in Australia seems to be deteriorating continuously as the nation embraces more and more liberal ideologies. Yet we praise God for His preserving hand upon our congregations and others who are faithful in times of darkness. We look to the Lord to pour out His blessing upon us.

In January, the first 'Vision Australia' quarterly emagazine was published by the 'Australian Commission' and was distributed among the congregations in Australia via email. It is hoped that the magazine will be a vital part of the onward progress in the works in Australia. The first magazine included an article on the work of Richard Johnston, the first preacher of the gospel in Australia, who arrived with the first fleet in January 1788. In January, Rev Ralph Hall travelled to New Zealand to preach at a Bible Conference. This was the first time any of our Australian ministers have preached at this

conference. We pray that the word preached will continue to be a blessing to all that attended. In December, the Perth Church held a three-day youth camp with ten young people connected with the congregation attending. Messages were brought in relation to Christ's incarnation as well as missionary lessons on the life of Mary Slessor, missionary to Calabar (modern day Nigeria). The camp was a time of blessing for all who attended. Lock Free Presbyterian Church engaged in several meetings in the nearby care homes during the week before Christmas. Some of the young people played musical instruments, and Rev Kyle Graham brought messages from God's Word. It was encouraging that some staff heard the messages presented. On the 14th of December, a prize-giving was held in the Port Lincoln church marking the end of the season. After taking part, the children were then rewarded for their hard work with prizes and certificates. ■

Book Appeal

CHRISTIAN BOOKS AND BIBLES ARE REQUIRED FOR THE BOOKSHOPS IN KENYA



All books and Bibles (new and used) can be given to Missionary Council Representatives

Special sending forth service for Miss Christina Logan

HOME MISSIONARY TO CHILDREN



SATURDAY 20 APR 2019, 7.30PM
Rasharkin Free Presbyterian Church

Office:

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3 Carrigenagh Road,
Kilkeel, BT34 4NE
T: 028 4176 5574
office@fpcmission.org

Chairman:

Rev Ian Harris,
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Annalong, BT34 4TY
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rev.harris@fpcmission.org

Secretary:

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STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCMISSION.ORG



Dates For The Diary

MARCH

8th + 9th

OMAGH, YOUTH CHALLENGE

Time: 8.00pm *Speaker:* Rev D Brown

10th - 17th

OMAGH, BIBLE WEEK

Time: Sunday 7.30pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm *Theme:* Personal Revival *Speaker:* Rev J Armstrong

16th

BANGOR, OPENING NEW CHURCH BUILDING

Time: 3.00pm *Speaker:* Rev G Dane (Moderator)

17th - 22nd

CROSSGAR, FOUNDATIONS CONFERENCE

Time: Sunday 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm *Theme:* The Life of Joseph *Speaker:* Rev D Erwin

APRIL

17th

PORTGLENONE, EASTER RALLY

Time: 8.00pm *Theme:* The Empty Grave *Speaker:* Rev C Mercer

20th

RASHARKIN, EASTER MISSIONARY RALLY

Time: 7.30pm *Speaker:* Rev I Harris *Reports:* Rev L Boyd, Miss C Logan

MAY

9th, 10th, 12th

RASHARKIN, SPRING BIBLE CONFERENCE

Time: Thur, Fri 8.00pm, Sunday 12noon & 7.00pm *Speakers:* Dr J Douglas, Rev G Dane

10th

LISBURN, YOUTH PRAISE SERVICE

Time: 8.00pm

12th - 26th

SANDOWN, GOSPEL MISSION

Speaker: Rev R Higginson

19th-31st

ARMAGH, BALLYMAGERNEY, MARKETHILL, PORTADOWN, TANDRAGEE

COMBINED GOSPEL TENT MISSION

Time: Sunday 8.30pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm

Speaker: Rev W McCrea

Free Presbyterian
Vision

