

Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

The
Sacraments

Serving
at God's
Call

They called
Him 'Jesus'...

NOV
2021
#54
£1.00



Contents

REGULARS

- 8 News
- 10 Kids
- 16 College News
Graduation and Commencement
- 17 A Word to Women:
Miss Norrie Hynes

FEATURES

- 4 The Sacraments
- 6 They called Him 'Jesus'...
- 18 Serving at God's Call

YOUTH

- 11 My Favourite Hymn
- 12 Christ –
The Incarnate WORD
- 14 Outreach in Belfast
- 15 Castlewella Weekend

MISSIONARY VISION

- 20 Clerk of Nepal Presbytery
Called Home
- 21 Noel Shields *on Outreach*
- 22 Margaret Russell:
Retirement Service
- 23 Emmanuel Electrical Project

Editorial

The words of Isaiah 55:11 are often quoted in prayer as an encouragement to gospel ministry. The statement, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it" has often spurred ministers, missionaries and congregations to press on with Christian outreach.

The focus of the text is God's Word, and it carries the promise that God's Word is not in vain. The world often refuses the gospel message, preferring to ignore the great truths of Christ. Some show no tolerance for a gospel tract or gospel text and think it beneath them to attend a place where the Scriptures are faithfully preached. The indifference to the Word of God can be discouraging, but the promise of God in Isaiah 55 still holds good. Christ continues to build His church and He does so through the preaching of the gospel. God's Word is powerful - sharper than any two-edged sword. It is like the hammer that breaks the rock in pieces. It is incorruptible seed that is forever settled in Heaven and, as it is sent forth, according to the will of God, it will not return to Him void. The church of Christ must not lose sight of the authority and power of the Scriptures. Let us remember that "the entrance of thy words giveth light" (Psalm 119:130) and, therefore, we should do all that we can to spread that Word. There is grave spiritual darkness across our nation. As all shades of false religion, immoral behaviour and rampant apostasy are evident around us, we must hold forth the powerful message of Christ and Him crucified. God has promised to bless the preaching of His Word and there is no telling what gracious results may flow from revived and reinvigorated Christ-centred preaching and spreading of God's Word in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit. ■



“Reader, do you have the assurance that He has saved you from your sins? To benefit from this wonderful provision of Christ, we must receive Him as He is offered in the Gospel, John 1:12. Having thus accepted Him, we must affirm our new status by following Him in all our ways.”

Presbytery Publications Committee

Dr R Johnstone (Convenor), Mr I Campbell (Business Manager), Rev D Creane, Rev L Curran (Associate Editor), Rev M Lecky (Secretary), Rev C Mercer (Editor), Rev T Nelson, Rev G Wilson (Associate Editor)
Design and Print by Pepper Collective. T: 07729 526366

Subscriptions

FP Vision is available from your local Free Presbyterian Church, or by contacting Ian Campbell:
Tel: 028 417 62645
Mob: 07709 429271
E: subscribe@fpvision.org

✉ Editor

editor@fpvision.org

**“O LORD,
I know that the way
of man is not in
himself: it is not in
man that walketh to
direct his steps. ”**

Jeremiah 10:23

The context of Jeremiah's words concerns the judgment of God which was due to fall upon rebellious Israel. The cruel Chaldeans were coming to take the nation into a long and grievous captivity. This calamity had the immediate effect of driving the godly prophet to his knees in prayer, hence this petition. Like all good prayers, it was founded on knowledge. Jeremiah brought his own bitter experiences and general observations to the Lord. He knew that the way of man is not in himself. He would have distanced himself from the foolish notion of the poet, Henley, who boasted, "I am the master of my fate and captain of my soul." Jeremiah knew that even the most powerful nations combined together are but the small dust of the balance (Isaiah 40:15). At least, another poet, Burns, was nearer the truth when he observed "the best laid schemes of mice and men" could go astray. So where does this leave us as we face the future? Are we all adrift on the shoreless sea of blind, random chance? Is it really the survival of the fittest – in this case the well-armed and ruthless Chaldean army?

Not at all. Jeremiah addressed the LORD, who is described not only as a "man of war" (Exodus 15:3) but as the sovereign God of all things. One of God's titles – Lord – in the original languages is 'Despot' (2 Peter 2:1) which simply denotes that He possesses absolute power, bounded only by His own glorious attributes. The fact that Jeremiah prayed teaches us that Almighty God is interested in human affairs and intervenes to direct our steps. Jeremiah's words, as they stand in the text, are suggestive rather than exhaustive i.e., we must compare spiritual things with spiritual things from other parts of Scripture to get the whole picture.

It is good to read that there is no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the LORD (Proverbs 21:30) and that He is working all things after the counsel of His own will (Ephesians 1:11); both, for His own glory (Romans 11:36) and our good (Romans 8:28). If the good man cannot order his own steps, then it is refreshing and reassuring that the Lord orders his steps for Him (Psalm 37:23). Our responsibility is not diminished by God's sovereignty on the matter. Here, it has fuelled Jeremiah's prayer. He applies his well learned truth with a further petition that God's judgment will be corrective rather than final (v24).

How practical is this lesson? 1 Peter 2:21 urges us to follow Christ's steps. Job affirmed that he had done so, claiming, "My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined" (Job 23:11). This godly submission, founded on faith in Scripture, is the path of ultimate victory in every day and circumstance. It worked then. It will work now. ■

✉ Mr C Maxwell, Home Missionary.



The Sacraments

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Matthew 28:19

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

“A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.”

Shorter Catechism, Question 92

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SACRAMENTS

Defining the Church

In the thinking of society, terms such as buildings, denominations, altars, clergy, pulpits and vestments define the Christian Church. As our Lord ascended into glory, however, He left behind a few dozen followers who had no buildings, finance nor any form of outward organisation. The Saviour did provide His apostles, though, with two confirmations of His continued presence. One confirmation was His Spirit, by whom the New Testament would be inspired and through whose power the apostles would bear witness. The second confirmation is the sacraments, the priceless heirloom which Christ has bequeathed to His people.

The word, ‘sacrament’, originates with the Latin *sacramentum*, denoting “something sacred”. Theologically, the Westminster Shorter Catechism is unsurpassed in its simple statement: “A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ.” The Protestant Reformers insisted that the Church is incomplete without the administration of the sacraments.

A Biblical Balance

There are two extremes in relation to the sacraments that we must guard against. The Church of Rome and its Anglo-Catholic counterpart presents the sacraments as essential for the salvation of the soul. The notion that saving grace is conferred when water is applied, or when the bread and

wine is received, runs contrary to biblical teaching that salvation is by grace alone – never by works. The pendulum swings too far in the opposite direction, however, when God’s people treat the sacrament either as an irrelevance or as an optional extra in the life of the Church.

THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE SACRAMENTS

An Act of Obedience

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul revisited the upper room with the authoritative phrase, “this do in remembrance of me” (1 Cor. 11:24). Our Lord, as with the Communion Feast, sanctified Baptism by His own example, when He yielded to the ministry of John. Prior to the ascension, His command was straightforward: the apostles were to baptise all nations in addition to preaching, teaching and making disciples. In the simplest possible terms, observing Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are acts of obedience.

THE REFRESHING THROUGH THE SACRAMENTS

Parables and Signs

The Shorter Catechism speaks of the water, bread and wine as being “sensible signs”, meaning that they are felt and experienced by the senses. They are parables employing earthly means to convey spiritual truth. The use of water, bread and wine, as refreshing substances for the body, teaches us that Christ refreshes our souls as we journey through the wilderness of life. They are not only parables but signs, reassuring us of the terms of the Covenant of Grace – that we are truly engaged to be the Lord’s. Baptism is the sacrament we receive once, representing the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost in converting our souls and uniting us to Christ. This act of faith and witness is a tangible reminder of our place within the body of Christ. The Lord’s Supper is the continual sacrament that we receive as often as our local fellowship dispenses the bread and the wine. Tasting the broken bread and the wine in a moment of solemn reflection causes the heart to rest on Christ by faith, amid the business of our hectic lives. It is a precious reminder of the love of God for us and is a perpetual testimony to the Saviour as we show forth His death “till He come” (1 Cor. 11:26).

THE RE-EVALUATION OF THE SACRAMENTS

Prompting Self-examination

Every part of our Christian experience must be constantly reassessed and examined – the sacraments can be no exception.

The elders of the Church have a duty to dispense these sacred ordinances, teaching their value, approving those who will receive them and refusing such as do not have a credible Christian testimony.

As Christians, we have a responsibility to engage in these ordinances for our “spiritual nourishment and growth in grace”.

While our denomination has an open stance where the subjects of Baptism are concerned (infants of godly parent(s) or adult believers only) and where the mode is concerned (pouring, sprinkling or full immersion), this remains a sacrament, which every believer ought to regard with solemn conviction. I would encourage every Christian who is not baptised to have a discussion with their pastor on what is a most vital subject.

I would also appeal to every believer to make it their business to attend the regular observance of the Lord’s Supper. Some feel unworthy being hindered by doubts. Others are prevented because of unrepented sin. Sadly, there are those who are simply careless and prioritise the sacrament out of their lives. The Lord’s Table challenges us to solemnly examine our own hearts in the days before the ordinance is received. It is a gentle, yet dynamic, aspect of our sanctification. It stirs the backslider to restoration, and it reassures the doubting soul. We must take care, however, that we do not reduce the sacrament to a mere ritual, an act of empty religion.

The Westminster Divines captured the spirit required: “The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them, but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.”

The “means of salvation” in this catechism is a reference to sanctifying grace rather than saving grace, and it is the faith of the recipient which is emphasised. The sacrament does not confer faith, but faith is required in order to receive. As faith is exercised through this act of obedience, the inner man is strengthened.

*Here, O my Lord, I see thee face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen,
Here grasp with firmer hand th’ eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon thee lean.*

*Here would I feed upon the bread of God,
Here drink with Thee the royal wine of heav’n;
Here would I lay aside each earthly load,
Here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiv’n.*

The Shorter Catechism quite rightly links Baptism and the Lord’s Supper with preaching the Word and prayer, as being the “means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of salvation”. One would not consider arguing that the Scriptures and prayer are superfluous. Why, then, neglect the sacraments? Pray that the Holy Spirit would help us all to not only partake, but to do so with faithful and sincere hearts that together we might continue steadfastly, developing in the knowledge and love of God. ■

✍ **Rev P McIntyre,**
Clogher Valley Free Presbyterian Church.



THEY CALLED HIM 'JESUS' ...

The number one positions are occupied by 'James' and 'Grace'. The former is followed by 'Jack, Noah, Charlie, Oliver and Thomas', and the latter by 'Emily, Isla, Fiadh, Olivia and Sophia'. What am I listing? Well, these are last year's most popular baby names in Northern Ireland, according to the Office of National Statistics.

Why did parents choose the name on which they decided? A variety of reasons is offered – personal preference, identification with a friend or family member, association with a famous person, or even such mundane considerations as the sound or the length of the name.

It was different in Bible times. Few parents today reflect on the meaning of the name they choose – and fewer still make that the decisive factor. Two thousand years ago in the Near East, given names were meant to convey information,

to detail some significant fact about the child or the circumstances of its birth. We are familiar with the stories of Samuel ('Asked of God') in the Old Testament and John ('God is gracious'), the son of the aged Zacharias and Elizabeth, in the New – just two rather obvious examples from among many that might be cited.

Joseph the husband of Mary had no decision to make on the child she was to bear. He received instruction from Heaven. The song 'Because He Lives' begins with the line, 'God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus' – and that's exactly what Joseph was directed to do by the angel of the Lord. "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21) Jesus is our writing of the Greek form of the Hebrew 'Joshua', which means 'The Lord saves' – and so, immediately, we are shut into the truth about the Messiah, Who He was, and why He came.

HUMANITY AND HUMILITY

It comes as quite a shock to some when they are told that the name 'Jesus' was quite common in the New Testament age. It would have been a name borne by many Hebrew boys. Jewish historian Josephus mentions around twenty individuals who had the name, and, of course, he refers to just a tiny percentage of the total population. When Philip sought to introduce Nathaniel to the Messiah, he felt the need to speak of His family connection and His home place – doubtless to distinguish Him from others sharing the name (John 1:45). Tradition holds that Barabbas, the murderer preferred to Christ by the Jewish mob, also had the name Jesus, and a careful reading of the relevant Scriptures appears to lend some weight to that view (Matthew 27:17, John 18:40). Later, Paul speaks of a believer who bore the name, and he was with the apostle as he wrote his letter to the Colossians (4:11). And so, while we make the name 'Jesus' unique, it was not so in those days.

It is natural, I suppose, that we should think of this name as too wonderful to be associated with any other but the child born at Bethlehem. Yet it is not meant to set Him apart from the sons of men, but to convey something of His humanity and humility. It is a human name – in some sense, an ordinary name – and it reminds us that He came into this world as a man, a real man. He came to be a Man among men, subjecting Himself to our human condition (Philippians 2:6-8), with all its troubles, trials, and temptations, though remaining Himself altogether without sin (Galatians 4:4, 1 Timothy 3:16). How do we explain it? It is beyond explanation! But we affirm it, the humanity of our Saviour, and the remarkable humility underlying it, all encapsulated in the choice of that precious name, Jesus!

PURPOSE AND PLAN

The name 'Jesus' announces that He came to save, and the angel declares that He will succeed in that mission. How sad that countless thousands today do not recognise the purpose of the Messiah in coming to this earth! Some are prepared to give Him a place – but it is not the place He seeks. To some, He is a great Teacher, whose words are eternally true. To others, He is the supreme embodiment of morality, a genuinely good man, the best of men, leaving us an example to follow. To others still, He is the great social reformer, seeking to redress all social wrongs, but with ideas so 'ahead of his time' that his mission was bound to end in failure. Whatever we think of these opinions, they all miss the mark: HE CAME TO SAVE!

The angel's announcement is only the first of many New Testament declarations of this blessed truth – see, for example, Matthew 18:11, 1 Timothy 1:15, 1 John 4:14, cf Luke 2:10-11. The challenge, then, is to know Jesus Christ

as He may be known – to know Him as Saviour. And the magnitude of this must not be lost: Christ will deliver from the greatest and most persistent problem any of us will ever face, the problem of our sin! Here is the promise of the text. "He shall save his people from their sins" – not sin in the abstract, but *our own sins*, the sins that blight our lives from one day to the next, the sins that mount up against us and that will destroy us forever if they be not removed. Atonement must be made. Reconciliation with a holy God must be effected. Peace must be secured. These things have been realised through the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He came to live and to die to deal with the problem of sin and to secure the redemption of His people. That purpose He has fulfilled gloriously, finishing the work He was given to do! (Isaiah 53:5-6)

ACCEPTANCE AND AFFIRMATION

How little esteemed is the name of Jesus in this age! How little store is set by His word and His work! So many have but the vaguest knowledge of who Jesus is, and why He came into this world. That being so, it is hardly surprising that His name is despised and trampled underfoot. How great is the contrast with the way in which He was, and is, viewed by His Father! (See Matthew 3:17, Philippians 2:9-11) It is right that the Messiah should be so honoured. How utterly amazing are the achievements of His life and death! Joshua, His Old Testament namesake, had a part in many marvellous accomplishments. He led his people across Jordan, brought victory over their enemies, oversaw their settlement in the land of promise – but he could not save them from their sins! Only Jesus Christ can do such a thing. All glory, honour, and praise to Him!

Reader, do you have the assurance that He has saved you from your sins? To benefit from this wonderful provision of Christ, we must receive Him as He is offered in the Gospel, John 1:12.

Having thus accepted Him, we must affirm our new status by following Him in all our ways. Christians bear the name of their Saviour, and everything they do casts a reflection upon His good name. Our works will honour Him or disgrace Him, it's as simple as that. And our calling is clear. "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..." (Colossians 3:17)

'Jesus is worthy to receive
Honour and power divine;
And blessings, more than we can give,
Be Lord, for ever Thine.'

Isaac Watts ■

✉ **Rev T Nelson,**
Tyndale Memorial Free Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

Installation of Rev Patrick Baker

📷 **Right:** Rev Patrick Baker (centre) is pictured following his installation service as the minister of Grace Free Presbyterian Church, Newtownards on 27 August 2021. Also included are (L to R) Revs J Armstrong, I Brown, S Murray, J Greer and J Woods.

📷 **Below:** Rev Patrick Baker, pictured with his wife Naomi and children (L to R) Lucy, Caleb, Phoebe and Zachary.



Installation of Rev Timothy Nelson

Rev Timothy Nelson was installed as the minister of Tyndale Memorial Free Presbyterian Church on Friday 10th September. He is pictured with church office bearers (L to R) Mr K Carrick, Rev T Nelson, Mr F Lecky, and Mr T Monteith.



📷 **Above:** Rev and Mrs Nelson are pictured in Tyndale Memorial Free Presbyterian Church on the Sunday following Rev Nelson's installation service.

Ministry in Tavistock

Mr Stephen Miller commenced his ministry in Tavistock on Sunday 5th September 2021. The church in Tavistock has been without a full-time minister for several years. Please pray for Mr and Mrs Miller as they settle into their new surroundings and as he continues to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.



Ordination and Installation of Mr Raymond Morrow

Rev Raymond Morrow was ordained and installed as the minister of Bushmills Free Presbyterian Church on Friday 17th September 2021.



 **Photo:** Rev Raymond Morrow with Rev Wesley McDowell (front left) and officer-bearers who serve in the Bushmills congregation.



 **Photo:** Rev Raymond Morrow pictured (second left) with the Officers of Presbytery (L to R) Revs J Greer, J Armstrong and C Mercer.

Praying for Ministers:

Charles Spurgeon

“Paul exceedingly valued the prayers of the saints. He was an apostle, but he felt he could not do without the intercessions of the poor converts at Philippi. He valued Lydia’s prayers and the prayers of her household; he valued the jailer’s prayer, and the prayers of his family; he desired the prayers of Euodias and Syntyche, and Clement, and the rest — the most of them, probably,

persons of no great social standing, as the world has it— yet he valued their supplications beyond all price, and was as grateful for their prayers as for those temporal gifts whereby the Philippians had again and again ministered to his necessities. If the apostle thus felt indebted to the pleadings of the brethren, how much more may we, who are so far inferior to him!”

My Favourite

Hymns

Hymns
of Faith

With God He was; the Word was God”.

Christ’s power and authority are introduced to us in verse 2. He is the creator and sustainer of all things: “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they* be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Colossians 1:16-17). Despite society’s evolutionary worldview and their quest for autonomy, Christ is creator and creation’s Head.

In verse 4, Watts shows us our fallen state as he describes Christ’s condescension from heaven’s glory to live among worms such as we. The Puritan, John Trapp, said, “Our Lord emptied and humbled himself to the utmost, that we might be exalted.” What a challenge that presents to the child of God – that we would be willing to be humble servants. Surely Christ deserves our all!

Our glorious Saviour is held up before us in verse 5 as the One who is full of truth and grace. Oh, how we thank God for His amazing grace shown towards sinners. What love has been demonstrated to sinful mankind through the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is through Him alone that the sinner can receive forgiveness of sin and experience true peace with God. It is only then that one can truly worship this Christmas season and sing of the glories of Emmanuel! ■

✍ **Rev Glenn Wilkinson,**
Londonderry Free Presbyterian Church.

As the Christmas season approaches, many of us look forward to singing carols in our worship services. Whether it is Charles Wesley’s “Hark the herald angels sing” or the children’s favourite, “Away in a manger”, they all bring us to that scene in Bethlehem as our Saviour is born in the humblest of surroundings.

Although we all have our own favourite Christmas carol, for me, there are not many that can improve upon, “Ere the blue heavens were stretched abroad” for its encapsulation of the deity and humanity of Christ. It was written by Isaac Watts (1674-1748) who began writing hymns at the age of fifteen and was known as the ‘Father of English Hymnody’. He went on to pen over 750 hymns and, although this carol may not be as well-known as his “Joy to the world”, yet it is full of deep truth and theology.

*Ere the blue heavens were stretched abroad,
From everlasting was the Word;
With God He was; the Word was God,
And must divinely be adored.*

*By His own power were all things made;
By Him supported all things stand;*

*He is the whole creation’s Head,
And angels fly at His command.*

*Ere sin was born, or Satan fell,
He led the host of morning stars;
Thy generations who can tell,
Or count the numbers of Thy years!*

*But lo! He leaves those heavenly forms,
The Word descends and dwells in clay,
That He may hold converse with worms,
Dressed in such feeble flesh as they.*

*Mortals with joy beheld His face,
The Eternal Father’s only Son:
How full of truth! how full of grace!
The brightness of the Godhead shone.*

*Archangels leave their high abode,
To learn new mysteries here, and tell
The love of our descending God,
The glories of Emmanuel.*

Based upon John 1:1-14, the majestic lyrics of the carol draw us wonderfully to the person and work of Christ. The first verse speaks of the eternity of Christ. He is the everlasting and unchanging Word. Bethlehem’s manger was not the beginning. There was never a time when Christ did not exist: “From everlasting was the Word;



Christ

The Incarnate Word

The opening verses of John's Gospel have long been regarded as some of the most profound and pre-eminent verses on the incarnation of Christ. While we do not have the narrative of the Christmas story, as in the other gospels, yet John opens with a superb introduction of the One whose coming into this world we remember at this time of the year.

One of the titles, that John attached to Christ, is the "Word". He frequently referred to Christ as the "Word": "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). As we consider this opening chapter of John's Gospel, it is important to learn the great truths that John lays before us concerning Christ the Word.

THE TEACHING ABOUT CHRIST'S INCARNATION

John wrote at a time when a group of religious scholars, known as the Gnostics, were in the ascendancy. They denied the person of Christ. To combat this wrong teaching concerning

Christ, John moved immediately to defend the person of Christ. He realised that if we are wrong in our understanding of who Christ is, then all of the rest of our thinking will be flawed. This is why John provides us with vital teaching about Christ in this opening chapter.

In verse 1, Christ is said to be with God – literally, face to face with God. The connection between God the Father and the Son is very close. There is a union between the Father and the Son. In John 14:10, Christ said, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me". John 1:1 goes on to state that the Word was God. This clear and simple

statement confirms the deity of Christ. The One whose birth we celebrate and remember at this time of the year is God. Charles Wesley put it well in his hymn:

*Christ, by highest heav'n adored;
Christ, the Everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of the Virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail th' Incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.*

In John 1:3, John identifies Christ as the Creator of this world. He created the entire universe. We are often told that this world came into existence as



to take His hand off the spinning axis of this world, we would know about it. The Christian can be encouraged. Christ is still upholding all things by the word of His power. There is nothing that happens outside of His control.

THE TITLE GIVEN IN CHRIST'S INCARNATION

The other Gospel writers refer to the Saviour by name, but John uses this title, "the Word", to refer to Christ. Three times in the opening verse, Christ is designated as the "Word". John, alone, uses this title for Christ. Consider:

The Meaning of it

A word is that which is spoken. It is putting into speech that which is in the mind. It is a means of communication. It is how we express what we are thinking. That is the meaning of this title, "Word", which John gives to Christ. More fully, it means the "Word of God". Christ reveals and manifests the mind of God to man. In Hebrews

1:1-2, we read, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

What a wonder that really is, that God, the great God of Heaven and earth, the ruler of this universe, would be so concerned with sinful man that

He sends His Son, Jesus Christ, into this world to speak unto us. He has come to speak that word of salvation and redemption – that word this world needs to hear so desperately.

The Marvel of it

Note the words of John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Christ, at His birth, took human flesh upon Himself. Though remaining

truly God, He became truly man. This means Christ is the sole and perfect mediator between God and man. He is the only means of access and approach to God. No man can come unto God but by Christ. No person will be ever saved but by Christ. Yet, while we marvel at such a truth, we also rejoice in such a truth because it is the bedrock of our faith – it is the foundation of all that we believe.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST'S INCARNATION

John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." This text brings us to the triumph of the Incarnation. Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners and transform them into the greatest of saints. He came to make sinners, like us, the sons of God. Christ took human form, became as we are, that we might become sons of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

This transformation takes place through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. The moment a sinner believes on and receives Christ, he/she becomes a son of God. What a change; what a transformation!

The Incarnation of Christ shows His great love towards a fallen world because it was love that brought Him from glory and took Him to the cross – there to make a full atonement for sin. Each part of Christ's life, death and glorious resurrection was part of the great plan of redemption – a plan that demonstrated the eternal love of Christ towards the sinner. Christ was triumphant because all who receive Him and rest alone on Him for salvation are eternally saved. There is no greater message at this Christmas season, or at any other season, than the message of redemption through Christ. There is no greater gift than the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, we rejoice that "...the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us..." (John 1:14). ■

✉ **Rev G Wilson,**
Sandown Free Presbyterian Church.

“
**WHAT A WONDER
THAT REALLY IS, THAT GOD,
THE GREAT GOD OF HEAVEN
AND EARTH, THE RULER OF
THIS UNIVERSE, WOULD BE SO
CONCERNED WITH SINFUL MAN
THAT HE SENDS HIS SON, JESUS
CHRIST, INTO THIS WORLD
TO SPEAK UNTO US.**
”

the result of a big bang. No! Christ spoke this world into its existence (Psalm 33:6,9). Not only did He create all things by the word of His power, but He also controls all things by that same all-powerful word: "...upholding all things by the word of his power" (Hebrews 1:3). He maintains the universe He created. The courses which the stars and planets, the sun and the moon take are controlled and regulated by Christ. Some people say that this world is out of control, but that is not so because Christ is in control. If He were just for a second

OUTREACH IN BELFAST

On three, consecutive Saturdays in August between twelve and fifteen young people gathered at John Knox Memorial Free Presbyterian Church to engage in outreach on the Shankill Road, Belfast.

Devotions began at 10:00am and focused on passages of Scripture that urged boldness and steadfastness in Christian service. The devotions were followed by a season of prayer, where God's blessing was sought upon the outreach.

At 11:30am, the young people began knocking the doors around the Shankill area. Many houses were visited over the course of the three days. The people were receptive to the message and there were many conversations about the things of God and salvation. This was a direct answer to prayer.



After a short break for lunch, the young people held an open-air on the Shankill Road. Three of the young men preached, with one also giving a word of testimony. There were also items of praise. For some, it was the first time they had preached in the open air, but the Lord gave help and boldness. The young people, who were not taking part, distributed gospel tracts and invitations to the follow-up Sunday night gospel service on 22nd August.

This gospel service was held in the John Knox Memorial church at 7:00pm. There were many young people in attendance, some of whom took part. It was a joy to see several, unsaved friends attend the service.

For some, it was their first time in the church, although some have family members who attend regularly.

Reflecting on the outreach, one young person commented, "We have much to praise the Lord for and we continue to pray for signs following the preaching of God's Word. Isaiah 55:11, 'So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.'" ■



WHEN? 27th November

WHERE? to be confirmed

WHO? ages 16-29

WHY? to give young people the opportunity to study specific subjects in the Bible together while enjoying fellowship and discussion.

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCYOUTH.ORG



Castlewellan Weekend

ALEX RAINEY REPORTS:

For me, the Castlewellan Weekend can be summed up with two phrases: “a time spent in fellowship with God and a serious lack of sleep.” To give an overview of the weekend: we had early morning prayer times, meetings, team activities and some free time to get to know other young people.

The topics considered in the meetings included: serving God in your local area and church; the Sabbath day; and the prayer meeting.

On a Christian youth weekend, our primary purpose was to grow in our Christian faith and, therefore, spending time around God’s Word was the focal part of all that we did. There was instruction and challenge in all the messages. One quote that really stuck with me was, “You are only safe on your knees.” It was noted that we have different needs and struggles – we have loved ones or friends who are far from God – but we often forget that God wants us to come to Him in prayer and lay all our burdens upon Him. We were reminded of the words of Philippians 4:6: “Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”

During the devotion times, we gathered together to encourage each

other and share our struggles and prayer requests. “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16).

From the Friday evening to the Monday morning, there was unity among the leaders and the young people. I have made many new friends during the weekend. The presence of God was felt especially through the blessed times of singing late at night in the castle and around the campfire. Throughout the weekend, every young person was given the opportunity to be involved in the meetings, using the talents that God has gifted them. This involved playing the piano, singing or giving a word of testimony.

We all took part in various activities and games on the Friday and Saturday. There was a competitive spirit among the teams. The leaders also put together a table quiz, where I quickly realised I was not much help to my team (apologies, folks). One of the last trips

we shared together was watching the sunrise on the Monday morning. Some made their way to Murlough beach and others faced climbing Binnian, while Julian “Adrian” Patterson sought the comfort of bed.

Young people, whether in school, university or in the workplace, often experience a lack of Christian support within our age group. Being in an environment with worldly pressures

“
I WOULD TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ENCOURAGE EVERY YOUNG PERSON TO APPLY TO ATTEND THE CASTLEWELLAN WEEKEND. IT IS SO ENCOURAGING TO SPEND TIME WITH THOSE WHO SHARE YOUR CHRISTIAN FAITH.
”

can prove difficult, so I would take this opportunity to encourage every young person to apply to attend the Castlewellan Weekend. It is so encouraging to spend time with those who share your Christian faith.

As a band of brothers and sisters in Christ, the Lord drew near unto us and blessed us. We give our thanks to our Heavenly Father for His goodness unto us. On behalf of all the young people, we would like to express our thanks to the leaders who organised the weekend – giving up their time and sleep to teach and encourage us. ■

✉ Alex Rainey

Whitefield College Graduation and Commencement



☒ **Above:** Graduating students (L to R)
Mr Stephen Nelson, Mr Simon Anderson and Mr Jonathan Wilson.

☒ **Right:**
Incoming Students,
Mr A Irwin and
Miss E Edwards.



Bethany Free Presbyterian Church, Portadown, hosted the annual Graduation and Commencement Service on Monday 20th September. Current restrictions limited those able to gather, but many others followed the proceedings on the livestream. Rev Alan Smylie (Academic Committee Convenor) conducted the service. Also participating were Lecturers Revs Leslie Curran and Samuel Murray and College Principal, Rev Timothy Nelson.

The Principal reported on a very challenging year for Students and Lecturers. He commended all for the resilience and flexibility demonstrated in ever changing circumstances and was glad to report that the year had been completed in a satisfactory manner. Appreciation was expressed to everyone who supported the College, and, most of all, to the Lord, whose goodness and faithfulness were constant. Mr Nelson welcomed two new students, Elizabeth Edwards and Andrew Irwin, both from Lisburn congregation. He spoke warmly of the three graduates, Simon Anderson (Mullaglass), Stephen Nelson (Ballynahinch), and Jonathan Wilson (England).

Rev John Greer (Clerk of Presbytery) oversaw the licensing of Mr Anderson and Mr Nelson to the ministry of the Free Presbyterian Church. The Moderator, Rev John Armstrong, led in prayer, before delivering a most challenging and appropriate message from 1 Chronicles 28:9-10. The service concluded with praise and prayer. ■

☒ **Rev T Nelson,**
Principal, Whitefield College of the Bible.



Miss Norrie Hynes

1907 – 2001

Miss Norrie Hynes was not a big lady in stature but (to use a cliché) “she punched above her weight”. She could best be described as passionate and particularly passionate about missionary work.

Miss Hynes was a schoolteacher who, aged thirty-nine, felt led to leave home and go to Nigeria with Qua Iboe Mission. It was 1946 and the Second World War was just over. Initially, Miss Hynes swapped a classroom in N. Ireland for a classroom in Africa, but, after some years, she felt led to work among remote tribes in the Nigerian bush. Life would have been very primitive with no luxuries, but the gospel message burned in her missionary heart. In II Corinthians 5:14-15, we read, “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” Every Christian should have a burden for souls. We no longer live to please ourselves and should want others to experience the joy of sins forgiven.

Miss Hynes served the Lord faithfully for twenty-one years in Nigeria. Sadly, in 1967, Nigeria was rocked by the dreadful Biafran war. Missionaries were forced to flee. Miss Hynes escaped with her life and little else on the last boat to sail from Nigeria. War and famine would claim about two million lives. Undoubtedly, some who heard the gospel from Miss Hynes were among the victims of the conflict. Life can change very quickly and death is never far from any of us. The Lord Jesus said, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4). Miss Hynes had been called later in life, but she used her time effectively and, like the labourers in the parable of the labourers (Matthew 20:1-16) she would receive her reward. Never assume that the Lord only calls

the young to serve Him. Many are called in their middle years and beyond. However, whatever our age, there is a work for every believer in their local church.



When Miss Hynes returned to N. Ireland, she was shocked by the spread of modernism and ecumenism. The gospel message was being lost and souls were being deceived. At considerable personal cost, Miss Hynes severed her links with the church she had belonged to and joined Lurgan Free Presbyterian Church in 1968.

Not being able to be active on a foreign mission field any longer did not mean that Miss Hynes could not be active in the Lord’s service.

Recognising that prayer is a vital part of the Lord’s work at home and abroad, Miss Hynes organised missionary prayer meetings in her own home. She was particularly interested in the work of the Acre Gospel Mission and in the Free Presbyterian Mission Board. In 1975, the Lurgan session appointed Miss Hynes, along with Mr John Dumigan, as representatives to the Missionary Council. At a monthly missionary prayer meeting in Lurgan, Miss Hynes brought prayer points for individual missionaries, ensuring that prayer was informed and specific. She remained active in the Missionary Council, travelling in 1995 to represent the Council at the opening of the church in Cortijos Nuevos.

In 1998, Miss Hynes suffered a stroke. She was a frail, old lady, no longer independent or able to be active in the Missionary Council. However, her passion for souls remained unabated until the Lord called her Home in December 2001. ■

✉ **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.



SERVING

AT GOD'S CALL

In 1959, when I was seven years old, my father received orders from the U.S. Army to report to Landstuhl Army Medical Centre, near the German border with France. From May of that year until the summer of 1963, we lived on that Army base and began learning the history and challenges of life as Americans in Germany. Living near the front lines of the Cold War, we had prime seats for historic events.

In October 1962, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, my father's unit and all the other active-duty personnel left the base for remote locations. My mother expressed her concern that there could be a catastrophic war with the Soviet Union. She asked my two younger brothers and me where we would be if we were to die. For the first time, I confronted that reality.

Our parents ensured that we were at church every time it was open, even from our earliest days. On the Army base, my father was very active in the Protestant Sunday School, even serving as its superintendent for two years. My mother, a Bible school graduate, knew the Gospel as well and impressed on us the need to receive Christ for ourselves. That situation provoked me to think about salvation. In August 1964, back in the United States, I followed the Lord in baptism

and was able to profess publicly my faith in the Saviour.

The memories of the four years in Europe left a lasting impression on my life. We lived about thirty miles from Worms, and I have felt ever since the atmosphere of the Protestant Reformation that was to have a major influence on my life and ministry. After my graduation from Bob Jones University in 1974, I met Mary Saylor who became my wife on 8th August 1975. Carolyn Ann was born on 12th November 1979.

While we served on the faculty at BJU, we began attending, in March 1978, a small Presbyterian church that was part of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster. By the summer of that year, we were regular attendees at Faith FPC. During that summer, the Rev Alan Cairns and his wife visited Greenville, where Mr Cairns supplied the pulpit for several weeks. In the Lord's providence, that visit inaugurated a series of changes that transformed life dramatically for them and, also, a few years later, for my wife, daughter and me.

Early in 1982, Mr Cairns preached a series of eight sermons on the life of Elijah. The Lord used those messages to impress on me His call to train for

the Free Presbyterian ministry. With the certainty of God's call, my wife and I resigned our faculty positions at Bob Jones University, and, in October 1983, I entered the Theological Hall that, years later, became Geneva Reformed Seminary.

After a year of study, I passed my comprehensive exams in July 1984 and began my pastoral internship under Dr Cairns' direction. At the same time, Richard Graham, an Arizona native who was a member of the Greenville congregation, challenged me to go to Arizona to establish a new Free Presbyterian church. I told Richard that I had no interest in his suggestion. However, about four months later, in answer to the persistent prayers of Richard Graham back in Arizona, God began to burden my heart with the need to become a church planter in Arizona. On 12th April 1985, the Lord confirmed His call to me.

The Lord provided funds for me to make an exploratory visit to Arizona early in May 1985. In August, having received the license of the presbytery to preach the Gospel, I moved my family to Arizona. The generous support of our home congregation along with help from our families and from friends we met in Arizona helped us establish ourselves in Phoenix.

The first worship service of Phoenix Free Presbyterian Church took place on 23rd February 1986, in a leased portable classroom building at a school in north Phoenix. At the beginning of 1987, several families, who were to join the nucleus of the fledgling mission, began to attend the services

During the fall of 1988, Herb and Olivia Tschappler, members of the Greenville congregation, moved to Phoenix to help in the establishment of the work. At almost the same time, a young man who was a new believer in Christ began attending the church. We knew him at the time as Kelly Morrow. Later, he married Kelly, a young lady in the church, and, to avoid confusion, he began using his given name, Kelvin. The congregation elected both men as deacons in 1996, and, in 2013, elected Herb as a ruling elder. Those two men continue to be influential in the maintenance and further development of the church.

Early in 1995, Dr Ian Paisley headed a delegation of presbytery members to conduct the service of constitution for the church and to preside at my ordination and installation as the church's first minister. The church had to move during the summer of 1997 to a much better, but still leased, facility. It moved again in 2004. In 2009, it purchased a commercial condominium in shell condition. The following year, the church hired a company to develop the interior as the permanent home for the church. Rev Ian Goligher and several other presbytery members, including Rev Colin Mercer, joined in the official dedication of the building on 25th September 2010.

In 2005, at the formal constitution of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America, the presbytery elected Dr Frank McClelland as its first moderator. The following year, when he declined renomination, the presbytery elected me as its second moderator. When my second term concluded in 2008, the presbytery elected me as its clerk, a position I held until my retirement from presbytery office in 2021.

During 1996, I joined the adjunct faculty of what would become Geneva Reformed Seminary. It is a position I still hold, having taught a course in December 2020. My burden is to help in the training of students who are preparing for the Free Presbyterian ministry.

In 2006, I began attending the meetings of the American Council of Christian Churches, a multi-denominational organization of separatist denominations, churches and individuals. The FPCNA has been a constituent member of the ACCC since 1993. In 2009, the Council president appointed me to the Resolutions Committee on which I served as chairman for two years. In 2012, the Council elected me to serve as vice-president, and, in 2016, chose me to succeed Dr John McKnight as the president. My work in the ACCC has been rewarding, as I serve alongside brethren from other churches and denominations who share the commitment to the separatist position that our denomination maintains.

Early in 2021, the congregation heard my announcement that I planned to retire from the pastorate at the end of June, concluding more than thirty-five years in that position. The session and committee organised a retirement dinner on 26th June, the eve of my final Lord's Day as pastor. Family members and friends joined the congregation for the occasion. At the session's request, the presbytery appointed the Rev Stephen Hamilton of our Lehigh Valley congregation in Pennsylvania as the interim moderator for the church. He assumed his duties on 1st July.

Mary and I have lived in the Phoenix area for more than thirty-six years and can testify to the Lord's faithfulness to us. He provided for our daughter's education, led us to the places in which we have lived, and guided us through all the decisions that establishing a mission work required.

On my last Lord's Day as pastor, I told the congregation that there were two matters that I never doubted. The call of God to me and my family to serve



Him in Phoenix was definite. None of all the challenges over the years shook that assurance. Secondly, that which the Lord called me to do above everything else in Phoenix was to feed Christ's sheep, and my ministry reflected that calling. The pastor's chief occupation has to be the pulpit ministry, and I resisted pressure to move from that emphasis.

The concern we have is for the consolidation of the foundation that the Lord has laid. It has been a privilege to serve Christ alongside those who trained me and prayed for me. Dr Alan Cairns continues to have a profound influence on my life. Dr Mark Allison took deep interest in the work of the Phoenix congregation over the years. His focus on the truth of justification by faith alone shaped my ministry.

The Free Presbyterian denominations continue to face the challenges of the apostate age in which they labour for Christ. Let their testimony be that they refuse to drift from the founding principles. Let them proclaim that they will not lower the standards of Gospel truth or engage in compromises with those who favour an easier way through the religious wilderness of this world. Churches that change what they are to gain greater relevance end by losing everything. May the next generation of Free Presbyterian ministers not surrender the foundations on which others have laboured to build the house of God. ■

✍ **Rev D Mook,**
retired, Phoenix Free Presbyterian Church, USA.

Clerk of Nepal Presbytery Called Home

Pastor Ramesh Kumar (Prakash) Basnet

23rd September 2021

Pastor Basnet was called home to glory after a short illness on the 23rd September 2021. He is survived by his sorrowing wife, Krishna, and their son and daughter. His remains were interred in Slesmontak Mountain. A Thanksgiving Service was held on the 24th September, which enabled his family, friends and colleagues from across Nepal to pay their respects. Over 150 men and women came to testify to the faithfulness of their beloved brother and colleague in the Lord. Pastor Prakash Rai of Nepal Free Presbyterian Church brought a powerful word based on 1 Corinthians 15:54 and gave testimony to the faithfulness and service of Pastor Basnet.

Pastor Basnet grew up in the far south eastern district of Jhapa Nepal, where his father continues to pastor a large Christian church. A second-generation Christian, Prakash followed in his father's footsteps and became a pastor. He studied the Bible, with Pastor Paul Thapa, under the tutelage of Pastor Sundar Thapa, a renowned Nepalese Christian leader.

He started New Hope church in his home, more than 15 years ago, in the Lalitpur district of Kathmandu. When the fledgling Free Presbyterian denomination commenced, he immediately joined with his old college friend and became a Free Presbyterian minister. He was ordained to the ministry under the auspices of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster on 29th November 2013. In 2017, he became Clerk of Presbytery, indicating how highly he was esteemed by the ministers of Nepal Presbytery.

Throughout the Christian community, he was known as a gifted teacher and taught in many different Bible colleges in the capital. He taught four subjects in Nepal Free Presbyterian Church Bible college since 2011. Students can testify to his friendliness and kindness, his humility, and how he encouraged them to go through with God. Psalm 116:15: "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints."

Commenting on the passing of Pastor Basnet, Mission Board Chairman, Rev Ian Harris, said, "When I first visited Nepal in 2008, I met Pastor Basnet and his family at one of the conferences at which Rev Wesley Graham invited me to speak. It was a privilege to get to know this dear brother and enjoy fellowship with him. He was an able translator – following my Ulster accent without any problem. His labours on earth are over but his works do follow him. We remember his wife and family, and those whom he pastored in the Nepali church in our prayers. Psalm 12:1." ■



“ Throughout the Christian community, he was known as a gifted teacher. Students can testify to his friendliness and kindness, his humility, and how he encouraged them to go through with God. ”

✉ Left: Pastor Basnet with his wife, Krishna, and son

Noel Shields on Outreach



Our home evangelists continued with their ministry during 2021. Colin Maxwell and Noel Shields have conducted numerous open-air services in various cities and towns in Northern Ireland. They have also preached at Drive-in Missions connected with local Free Presbyterian congregations in Markethill, Mullaglass, Moneyslane, and Hillsborough.

Speaking of their work, Noel Shields reported, “Generally, the meetings were well attended with God’s people coming along each night to support the preaching of the gospel. Several unsaved and backsliders were in attendance throughout these meetings and two precious souls professed faith in Christ at the Moneyslane mission. We pray that the Lord will lead them on with Himself. At the time of writing, we are doing door-to-door visitation for our next Drive-in Mission which is being held at Tullyvallen Free Presbyterian Church. These are unusual times for us all, yet we thank

the Lord for the opportunities that have been given to us to declare the gospel. Please pray that the Lord will bless the seed that has been sown to the salvation of many. With the dark nights now hastening upon us, we trust to recommence our street evangelism around the Province. This will include the distribution of tracts and holding open air services.” ■

✉ **Left:** Noel Shields engaged in door-to-door visitation, in Newtownhamilton, Co. Armagh.

✉ **Below:** Home evangelist, Noel Shields, preaching at the Drive-In Gospel Mission at Moneyslane Free Presbyterian Church.



Glory Bible Church, Kenya

It is another time when we thank the Lord for God’s blessing in Glory Bible Church. Our church was established a few years ago. After this, we found that it was needful to establish official church membership. From 2019 to 2021, discipleship classes were taught to prepare those who intended to seek membership. Early this year, several congregants applied for membership and, later, they were interviewed: some passed the interview; others had to wait until one year worshipping with GBC elapsed; and a few needed to be baptised.

On 25th September 2021, we had a baptismal service and three were baptised. The service took place in Le Voyage. The Scripture reading

was from Romans 6:1-11. The emphasis was the need for a sinner to be brought into union with Christ by the Spirit of God. Water baptism does not save but is a public declaration of trust in the Lord. Thereafter, we had fellowship at the venue. The next day, the Lord’s Day, was a very important day for GBC Bikeke and Shimo, for it was a day when those accepted for membership were to be given the right hand of fellowship and welcomed into GBC.

Pastor Patrice from Kakamega preached from Acts 2:37-42. Pastor Andrew read from Numbers 6:24-26 and wished them God’s blessings as they continue as members of GBC. Pastor Patrice committed

them to the Lord in prayer. This was followed by our communion service when Pastor Andrew preached from 1Corinthians 11:24-29 and, thereafter, administered the elements. After the communion service, the new members were reminded of their responsibilities as church members. Nineteen new members were welcomed into Bikeke and Shimo GBC churches.

We thank the Lord for His undertakings and we thank the Mission Board for their prayers, support and encouragement to see that GBC membership is established. We are also looking forward to seeing membership being established in other GBC branches.

Do continue to pray for us. ■

✉ **Pastor Andrew Cheptoo**

Margaret Russell: Retirement Service



behalf of the Russell family and Rev John Gray on behalf of Tandragee congregation. Miss Russell responded with thanks and words of reflection from her time in Kenya. A video presentation was shown, revisiting Margaret's early years, her college training, her call and early days in Kenya, her Sunday school work and her administration and oversight of the building and running of the Christian Academy. The video is available to view at www.fpcmission.org/gallery.php. Greetings were brought from Kenyan pastors in Glory Bible Church and Bible Christian Faith Church, including Rev Nathaniel Kendagor. Rev Malcolm Patterson and Miss Noreen McAfee also brought greetings and good wishes for a long and fulfilling retirement. ■

Our denomination holds our missionary to Kenya, Miss Margaret Russell, in the highest esteem. This was exemplified in the contributions at the service to mark her retirement on 21st September 2021. The service was held in Tandragee Free Presbyterian Church (her home church for over fifty years) where there was a wide representation of people from many congregations. Margaret's family turned out in large numbers, showing their respect for the oldest of the Russell siblings, who left Ulster as a young woman to follow the call of God.

Various ministers took part during the evening, each one reflecting on Margaret's work in Kenya and the legacy she has left behind. Rev Ian Harris (Mission Board Chairman) led the meeting and others taking part included Rev David Park (Missionary Council Chairman), Rev John Gray (Mission Board member and minister of Tandragee FPC), Rev David McMillan (Mission Board member) and Rev Samuel Murray (previous minister of Tandragee FPC). The Moderator

of Presbytery, Rev John Armstrong, brought a sincere message of thanks and encouragement to Margaret from the entire denomination and Dr John Douglas offered a prayer of thanksgiving for Margaret's 38 years of missionary service. Her long-time friend, Rev John Greer, brought a closing message from John 4:34: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

'Great is thy faithfulness' was the appropriate solo sung by Mrs Mary Baxter and presentations were made by Mr Alastair Hamilton on behalf of Mission Board, Mr Bertie Russell on

📷 **Top:** Miss Margaret Russell.

📷 **Above left:** Miss Margaret Russell is pictured at her retirement service with (L to R) Revs D Park, D McMillan, J Greer, S Murray, Mr B Russell, Rev J Gray, Mr A Hamilton, Revs I Harris, J Armstrong and Dr J Douglas.

📷 **Below :** Miss Margaret Russell with members of her extended family circle.



Emmanuel Electrical Project

Imagine what life would be like without mains electric: that is what it is currently like at the Emmanuel Mission Station in Uganda. There are many challenges that are faced there in everyday life without the mains supply – especially because they are not far from the Equator and there are long nights all year round. For over two years, the Mission Board has been working towards installing mains electric at Emmanuel. However, the work has been greatly hindered because of Coronavirus restrictions.



At the end of 2019, for the very first time, an electric supply was brought into the community around Emmanuel. Then, in February 2020, an electrical team went out from Northern Ireland, led by Mr Kyle Wenlock (Magherafelt) and Mr Richard Foster (Kilskeery). During their two week-long visit, the team rewired most of the campus for the mains supply. An important part of this project was having a custom-built electrical switchboard. Three months ago, the switchboard was completed,

packaged and shipped to Uganda. It has recently cleared customs in Kampala and arrived safely at Emmanuel. Please pray that travel circumstances will soon allow the electrical team to return to Uganda, so that the work on the installation of the mains electric can be completed. ■

📷 **Above:** The electrical team in Uganda (February 2020)

📷 **Left:** The electrical switchboard being loaded onto the small truck at Kampala for final delivery at the Emmanuel Christian School



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



Office:

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

Chairman:

Rev Ian Harris,
23a Moneydaragh Road,
Annalong, BT34 4TY
T: 028 4376 8040
rev.harris@fpcmission.org

Secretary:

Rev David Park,
55 Market Street,
Ballymoney, BT53 6ED
T: 028 2766 2039
hebronfpc@btconnect.com

Treasurer:

Mr Alastair Hamilton,
37A Ballymacvea Road,
Kells, Ballymena BT42 3NH
T: 078 6061 6302
a.hamilton@fpcmission.org

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCMISSION.ORG



Encouragement for the Exhausted

“When I fall, I shall arise.”

MICAH 7:8

“Despair is Satan’s masterpiece.”

John Trapp

It seems odd that the hero of Mt. Carmel should flee at the threat of a woman. But he did. He ran for his life, and yet when he was alone he cried to the Lord to let him die. The reason is not difficult to find. The Lord said, “The journey is too great for thee.” Elijah was a great man, but he was still just a man, and a terrible nervous reaction set in after his physical and spiritual exertion in confronting the prophets of Baal. Overtaxed in mind and body, he felt his work a failure when Jezebel could still issue a royal threat against him. He was hasty and he was wrong, and his retreat left the reform movement in Israel without a leader.

We all tend to make the same mistake when we are physically and mentally exhausted. Perhaps you are even now enduring such a bleak experience. All your labour seems in vain. You can hardly face even your friends. You cry to God, “It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life” (I Kings 19:4). Yet even as you cry,

you feel guilty for having such feelings. It is a vicious circle. Is there no answer?

For the prophet in retreat, the Lord had a word of reassurance. He found him; He fed him; He fellowshiped with him in the Mount of God. Here is what exhausted souls need: food and fellowship from the Lord in the secret place. The Lord did not speak to Elijah in the great wind, or in the fire, but in a still small voice. He does not crush the bruised reed. He spoke with kindness and understanding to His exhausted prophet. He had yet work for him to do, and so He prepared him for the final chapter of his remarkable history.

Do not be too quick to heed your depressions and conclude that God has finished with you. Get alone with Him. Look again to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith. Hear His still small voice assuring you, “I will never leave you.” You may have fallen, but you will arise again. ■