

# Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

Revive Thy  
Work, O Lord!  
Co. Down

Be Still  
& Know

Christ's  
Resurrection:  
Grounds for New Life

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2023  
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# Contents

## REGULARS

- 8 News
- 15 A Word to Women
- 16 Church Life  
*The Privilege of Tithing*
- 17 Free Presbyterian  
Historical Society  
*Annual Lecture*

## FEATURES

- 4 Christ's  
Resurrection:  
*Grounds for New Life*
- 6 Revive Thy Work,  
O Lord  
*Country Down*
- 18 Be Still and Know

## YOUTH

- 10 Kids  
*Salt*
- 11 Book Review
- 12 Untold Billions are  
Still Untold!
- 14 Summer 2023 Outreach  
*London*

## MISSIONARY VISION

- 20 Retirement Dinner
- 20 25 Years on the Field  
*Miss Joy Gillespie*
- 21 Missionary Council Weekend  
*60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*
- 22 From the Treasurer
- 23 Easter Missionary Rally

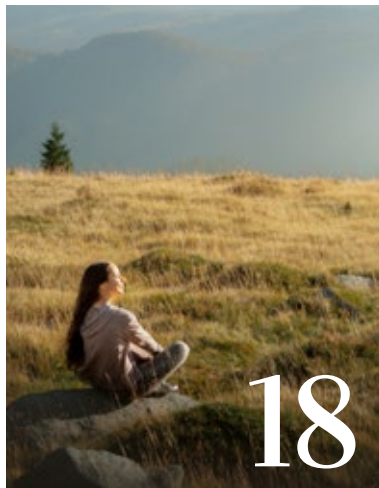
## Editorial

‘Assist us to live, not die’. I saw this powerful slogan recently on the website of an organisation that valiantly contends against the assisted suicide lobby. It is heartbreaking to think that society is in such a moral cesspit that we now have to plead for life. In addition to crying out against such wickedness, there is an increasing need for volume of prayer to ascend to God. May we rise to this challenge by God’s grace.

However, this slogan got me thinking about the phrase ‘life and death’. Very soon, the Christian church will once again bring her focus to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. For those who seek to promote euthanasia in all of its forms - there is no regard for the ‘after this’. The arguments are generally along the lines of ‘showing compassion’; but, as we know, man is made up of more than just the material part. He has a soul that lives on after the body is laid to the ground. During the time of His earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus posed one of the greatest evangelical questions ever asked when He challenged all to count the cost of gaining the world but losing the soul. More than this, Christ secured for His people their salvation by giving Himself over to the cruel death of the cross. There was and is no assistance from us in God’s salvation - it was all of the Lord and also all of grace. Hear Him say with all the authority of the Son of God, ‘No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.’ (John 10:18)

One of the most incredible truths which I never grow tired of considering is that, in the death of Christ, we have the only example of One who was willing and able to give Himself a sacrifice for others. Let us bow in humble adoration as we rejoice in His perfect life, His vicarious death, and His triumphant resurrection. ■

✉ Editor  
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“On account of His perfect obedience and one sacrifice for sin, Christ rose from the dead, ushering in for His people what might termed a new humanity. By new, we do not mean ‘different’, but a transformed humanity.”

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# Depending instead of Fretting



**I**n Psalm 37, we discover the phrase ‘fret not’ is used three times; it is found in verses 1, 7 and 8. In verse 1, we are admonished to ‘fret not’ because of the presence of evildoers around us. In verse 7, we are warned to ‘fret not’ when we see the prosperity of evildoers among us. And, in verse 8, we are to ‘fret not’ and yet be on our guard against our innate propensity for evildoing. The overall theme that runs through the entirety of the Psalm is the exhortation to trust in the Lord and to wait patiently for Him to act. Therein is a vivid contrast made between the wicked person and the regenerate.

The Psalmist recognises the workings of evildoers and the temptation that their worldly prosperity is to the righteous. Yet the Psalmist constantly encourages those who profess godliness to perceive that, while the ungodly expend themselves for the here and now, the truly wise man or woman will purpose themselves to live in light of their treasure settled in heaven.

The presence of evil and the proliferation of evildoers is by no means a new phenomenon today - it was similar to the Psalmist’s day. Ever since the fall, the workings of evil and evildoers have been cancer within society through every age. Throughout this particular Psalm, it is evident to see issues surrounding the

behaviour and aspirations of wicked men and their hatred and bitterness against the righteous in that age.

How did the Psalmist deal with this, and how are we in turn to deal with it in our own lives? He admonishes them with this answer: ‘fret not’. Look to and depend upon the LORD. Fret not but trust in the Lord.

The two words ‘fret not’ are words of warning, because fretting is a dangerous activity. While fretting may cause you to rail about what you see as the injustices of life, there is a more dangerous and damaging aspect to it. Fretting can lead you to rail against God; and, as verse 8 reveals, fretting to this extent leads to sin. Verse 8 reads: ‘Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.’

The Psalmist gives numerous reasons why we ought not to fret: ultimately evildoers will be cut off, whereas the God-fearing will inherit the earth, and will delight in an abundance of peace (verses 9-11). Therefore, any temporary gain the wicked possess will be lost to them, in contrast to the eternal nature of the godly man or woman’s reward.

Whatever challenge you face, dear reader, at this particular time or in days ahead- ‘fret not’. Look to and depend upon the LORD. Keep your eyes upon Him, for our feet will stumble if we look away from Him and focus on ourselves or upon the circumstances around us. ■

✍ **Rev Brian Lorimer,**  
Cloughmills Free Presbyterian Church.

**“ While the ungodly expend themselves for the here and now, the truly wise man or woman will purpose themselves to live in light of their treasure settled in heaven. Fret not but trust in the Lord. ”**





# Christ's Resurrection

## Grounds for New Life

**T**here is a great weakness in humanity to look for that which is novel. Marketers have long known that sometimes all it takes to boost sales is to repackage an old product with a new name, with new packaging, or to frame the product in a new way. This is not isolated to commercial endeavours but makes its way into everything, including religious life. There is always a new Babylon opposing Zion.

But when Paul spoke of believers

walking in 'newness of life' (Rom. 6:4), he intended to explain what is true for all the people of God. Believers do not need to seek novelties when they have Christ. Such is the believer's union with Christ that, not only are we crucified and dead with Him, but we are also buried with Christ and possess the likeness of His resurrection (Romans 6:5).

These truths result in the believer walking in 'newness of life'; they cannot help but live a holy life.

### **WE MUST KNOW OUR NEW LIFE**

In several verses of Romans 6, the apostle uses various words for knowledge. In verse 6, it means to know something by experience. In verses 9 and 16, the word means to see or perceive. And in verse 3, the word translated 'know' is again different - it means to be ignorant because of a lack of information or intelligence. Paul is concerned that they might be ignorant about something - but what is it? In the previous chapter, Paul compares several truths that every Christian must know.

#### ***A. Man is physically identified with Adam or Christ***

Romans 5:12, 14, 18 and 19 show that all humanity is connected to Adam. Adam was a man, and we all partake of the same humanity. Adam was made in the likeness of God, and his son Seth was made in the likeness of Adam (Genesis 5: 1, 3). Every one of us is like Seth in this respect.

Thus, in order to save us, God the Son had to take the same nature - human nature (Hebrews 2:14). On account of His perfect obedience and one sacrifice for sin, Christ rose from the dead, ushering in for His people what might termed a new humanity. By new, we do not mean 'different', but a transformed humanity. This newness we benefit from now in part through this life, but the full realisation will be when saints are glorified. Paul touched on this further when writing to believers at Philippi: 'who (Christ) shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body...' (Philippians 3:21).

#### ***B. Man is federally identified with Adam or Christ***

The Westminster Larger Catechism asks, 'Did all mankind fall in that first transgression?' And answers, 'The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.'

Note that Adam is referred to as a 'public person.' Without getting into some nuances of theology, Adam represents humanity. Romans 5 contrasts Adam with Christ and argues that believers in Christ are now represented by Christ rather than Adam (Romans 5:15, 17-19, 21).

#### ***C. Man is judicially identified with Adam or Christ***

The argument Paul makes is that Adam's sin and his representation of humanity results in death. Repeatedly, Paul says, 'death by sin; and so death passed upon all men' (verse 12), 'death reigned from Adam to Moses'

(verse 14), 'for if by one man's offence death reigned by one' (verse 17), 'that as sin hath reigned unto death' (verse 21). Yet, by faith alone in Christ alone (Romans 5:1), we are brought to experience eternal life (verse 21).

#### ***WE MUST RECKON OUR NEW LIFE***

What is the character of those that have eternal life by grace alone? The 'newness of life' spoken of in Romans 6:4 flows out of the fact that Christ was raised up from the dead. Christ's post-resurrection life signifies to every Christian something about the Spirit's work of regeneration in them. But what concerns Paul is that these believers believe what is objectively true about themselves. The word translated 'reckon' in Romans 6:11 means consider to be true. He wants them to consider what is true about their new lives in Christ.

#### ***A. The genesis of this new life is grace***

Charles Spurgeon once said, 'Remember, with regard to God, that his grace to man was utterly unsought. He does give grace to those who seek it, but none would ever seek that grace unless unsought grace had first been bestowed. Sovereign grace waiteth not for man, neither tarrieth for the sons of men. The love of God goes forth to men when they have no thought after him.'

As Paul delineates this marvellous salvation, the grace of God underpins the argument. But how does a holy God mediate grace to undeserving sinners? That brings us to consider another thought.

#### ***B. The governor of this new life is Christ***

Christ is the Mediator of the covenant of grace. For that reason, when Paul speaks of grace, it is governed by the person and work of Christ. 'the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ... even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ' (Romans 5:15, 21). We should note the preposition 'by' and its connection to Christ in each sentence.

#### ***C. The goal of this new life is eternal life***

Finally, note that all this leads to

eternal life, 'even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ' (Romans 5:15, 21).

A Biblical understanding of eternal life leads us to see that it has an already/not yet aspect to it. In one sense, we already possess eternal life. Many verses could be cited, but John makes it abundantly clear in 1 John 5:13. See also John 3:36; 5:24; 6:54. But eternal life is also future. Jesus speaks of what we have now and what we shall have in the future, 'and in the world to come eternal life' (Mark 10:30).

#### ***WE MUST YIELD IN THIS NEW LIFE***

As noted, it is crucial that we consider what is objectively true about us. This 'newness of life' is something that is a reality for every believer from the moment of their conversion. The resurrection of Christ immediately gives life to all who believe. As a result, the Christian is not a mere spectator of Christ's resurrection but is a participator in Christ's resurrection. Since you participate in Christ's resurrection, you are to yield up your life more and more to God, just as Christ did (see Romans 6:13; vv. 16-19).

Paul uses different words to communicate similar truths. Put simply, since faith results in placing the Christian in vital union with the risen Christ, then they live to God instead of sin (Romans 6:10), and they obey God instead of sin (Romans 6:16, 19).

As you meditate on a risen Christ, remember that you are not just a spectator of this miracle, but a participator. By God's grace, you can endeavour to walk even so as Christ walked (1 John 2:6). By faith, see the power of the resurrection and yield your life to God, so that sin will not have dominion over you (Romans 6:14). That is what Paul means when he refers to the 'glory of the Father' (Romans 6:4) - it is His power. Since this power raised Christ from the dead, it can empower you to live a victorious Christian life. ■

✍ **Rev Armen Thomassian,**  
*Faith Free Presbyterian Church, North America.*

REVIVE THY WORK,  
O LORD!  
CO. DOWN

The term revival in the church is often taken to be synonymous with the term awakening, and the thought of awakening presupposes the fact that the church has gone to sleep. There have been many periods in history when, sadly, this has been the truth.

#### EARLY BLESSINGS

County Down is the county where the Christian church is reputed to have

been first established in Ireland. When Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, came back to minister on the island, he sailed up Strangford Lough and established his first church in the place now known as Saul. God blessed the efforts of His servant in those days as he confronted a land that was dark in pagan religion.

County Down is also associated for a short time with the ministry of John Livingstone who came as minister of the Parish of Killinchy but who is famous as the preacher at the Kirk of Shotts revival in Scotland in 1630. Livingstone, then only twenty-seven years old and not yet ordained, reluctantly agreed to preach at the Monday morning communion. But he was filled with such insecurity, with so many senior ministers attending, that he attempted to run away before the meeting, only to feel the Lord compel

him to come back. He then preached with such unction that, in the end, 500 people were converted. And when Livingstone came to County Down later in 1630, he experienced the effects of revival again in what was known as the Sixmilewater revival, which started in Antrim in 1625, but spread for several years from Antrim into Down. Livingstone commented on that revival and of the new Christians who were previously living very profane lives and said of them now, 'I do not think there were more lively and experienced Christians anywhere, than were these at that time in Ireland.'

#### 1859 AND GOD'S WONDROUS POWER

Another revival which spread from Antrim into Down is the 1859 revival. According to William Gibson, the historian of the revival, the



neighbourhood of Comber was the very earliest visited by the 1859 revival in this county. For about fourteen years previously, meetings had been held for the purpose of seeking revival; and when the Spirit at length came upon the people, it was with wondrous power. Hundreds were awakened and savingly turned to God. Rev. J. M. Killen of First Comber Presbyterian said, ‘the whole town and neighbourhood was roused.’

Shortly afterwards, Newtownards was also affected. Indeed, William Gibson made a remarkable statement about what happened in Newtownards. He said, ‘In no part of the province, so far as I can learn, has there been a more genuine work of grace than in the town of Newtownards.’ That is certainly a big statement when you think of all that took place in 1859. Mr M. Harrison, the teacher of the National School in the town, told of the darkness of that place prior to revival. He said that, in a population of 12,000, only about 1200 attended any church whatsoever. But on hearing of what was happening in Connor and Ahoghill, Mr Harrison went to see for himself and was deeply impressed. He asked two young men from there— one a teacher, and the other a Scripture reader, to come to Newtownards and give an account of what the Lord was doing there. They came about a week after, and, before a considerable audience, told of the wondrous scenes they had witnessed. And the wondrous scenes spread to Newtownards. William Gibson reported on the effects of open-air meetings established in the town, ‘Every face wore an expression of awe. In thousands of hearts and on hundreds of lips was this question. What must I do to be saved?’

The revival swept on to Killinchy, Carryduff, Boardmills, Saintfield, Ballynahinch, Crossgar, Raffrey, Killyleagh, Ballygowan Carrowdore, Dromara, Donaghcloney, Banbridge, Magheralin, Tullylish, Rathfriland, Newry, Glascar, and along the coastal towns down the Ards Peninsula.

### 1859

Having given an account of revivals that started in County Antrim, let us come to one that can be claimed to have started in County Down, the first to start there since the days of Patrick it would seem. This was the revival of 1920-22. Although several preachers enjoyed success during this period, the revival was overwhelmingly associated with W.P. Nicholson and his ministry in Ulster, starting in Bangor, his home town. In 1920, in order to recuperate from an appendix operation, he returned home to Bangor; and, while he was there, he was asked by the Christian Workers Society to conduct a mission for them. Preparations were duly made, and a call went out for prayer. Dozens of prayer meetings were held in the homes of the people and every street was claimed for Christ.

When the meetings started, the large hall was full to overflowing, and God began to move in power. A bigger hall had to be obtained to contain the meetings. In the annual report of the Bangor Christian Worker’s society, it was reported, ‘It will ever stand out in the history of Bangor, as a time of the most outstanding revival and awakening of the last century.’ With the success of these meetings, invitations began to flow in for Nicholson to come and take meetings elsewhere. In Newtownards, one old man who had experienced 1859 even said that the effects of what happened in the Nicholson meetings exceeded what had happened in 1859. One of the foundation members of Crossgar Church, the late Jim Coulter, remembered being brought to the Nicholson mission in Ballynahinch which took place on Church Meadow in 1925. He was a child and became frightened as he saw them taking down the sides of the tent in which the mission was being held. As a child, he feared that they were going to toss the tent around the congregation while they were inside. But he said that when they removed the sides of the tent he was amazed to see as many people sitting on a bank outside the tent as were inside. He remembered some of Nicholson’s humour. He said that a young lady in yellow came in, and Nicholson turned to two older ladies dressed in black and said, ‘You old crows move over to give that canary a perch’. Other missions in County Down included one in Donaghadee, and hundreds were brought to Christ in every centre where the gospel was preached.

### CROSSGAR

Sometimes overlooked in the accounts of revival is what happened in and around the mission in 1951 that started our Crossgar Church. There was certainly a move of God at that time. Rev Paisley, as he then was, had a remarkable Gospel campaign in Rathfriland, which started in the Friends Hall and had to move to the Presbyterian Church hall, at which around 200 souls were counselled for salvation. Speaking of that and two missions that he had in Ballymena, at which it was estimated that 1000 were saved, the evangelist testified, ‘There was a great movement of the Spirit of God.’ Then came the invitation to Crossgar. It is not the purpose of this article to deal with the controversy surrounding that, but just to rejoice in the 94 precious souls who professed faith in Christ. I have spoken to people who were at those meetings and some who were saved through that mission and all testify to the sense of the Lord’s presence there. There was earnestness shown by the evangelist and the people as they prayed for their neighbours. One testified about how Mrs Paisley, Dr Paisley’s mother, would urge people to get right with God.

And what is our prayer? Our prayer is that God would do it again! ■

✍ **Rev Gordon Dane,**  
Crossgar Free Presbyterian Church.

“  
*County Down is the county where the Christian church is reputed to have been first established in Ireland.*  
”

# Elder ordained in Aughnacloy

Mr Benson George was ordained as an elder in Aughnacloy Free Presbyterian Church on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2022. Mr George has attended the congregation for many years, serving on Committee as Treasurer. ■



Mr Benson George pictured with members of the augmented session. Back row (L to R) Mr Mervyn Carrick, Mr Howard McFarland, Mr David Aiken, Mr Kenneth Lockhart and Mr Andrew Dobbie. Front row (L to R) Mr Stephen Hanthorne, Rev Simon Anderson, Mr Benson George and Mr Robert Henderson.

L to R: Rev Colin Mercer, Mr Stephen Hanthorne, Rev John Wagner, Rev Peter McIntyre, Rev Simon Anderson, Rev John Greer, Rev John Armstrong, Mr Kenneth Lockhart and Mr Benson George.

# Memorable Day for Bushmills

On Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022, the congregation in Bushmills Free Presbyterian Church marked an historic occasion as Mr William McCurdy was ordained. He is the first member of the congregation to hold the office of Elder and takes this office having served faithfully as secretary on the Committee. ■



Pictured in the centre is Mr McCurdy along with (L to R) Revs John Armstrong, John Greer, Raymond Morrow, John Woods and Wesley McDowell.

L to R: Mr McCurdy along with his wife Rhonda and their three children, Archie, Anna and Adam.



# Bethany Honours Faithful Members

On Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2022, Bethany Free Presbyterian Church, Portadown, acknowledged a number of office bearers and long standing members who stepped down from their various roles. Elders Mr Ben Telford, Samuel McCausland, and Mr Herbie McNabb received the honorary title of ‘Elder Emeritus’. Mr Samuel Stevenson was acknowledged as stepping down as elder after serving for many years. Also acknowledged was Mrs Mary Halliday, who retired as church organist after 45 years of faithful labour. ■



📷 L to R: Mrs Mary Halliday pictured along with Rev Daryl Abernethy.



📷 L to R: Messrs Sam McCausland, Ben Telford, Herbie McNabb and Sam Stevenson with Rev Daryl Abernethy (centre).

# Sunday School Excellence in Gilford

📷 Pictured is Joseph Brown alongside Rev Gregory McCammon. Joseph was presented with a Bible, certificate and gift after perfectly passing the Child’s Catechism. ■



# Gordon Cooke celebrates his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday

📷 Congratulations to Rev Gordon Cooke who recently celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. The occasion was marked by a visit from Rev John Armstrong, Moderator, Rev Samuel Murray, Deputy Moderator, Rev Raymond Robinson and Rev James Beggs, when a gift on behalf of Presbytery was presented. ■



COMPILED BY  
ROBERT MCCONNELL



'Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.'

Mark 9:50

## Salt

Would you mind passing me the salt, please? This is the mannerly way to ask for salt at mealtimes. However, the usage of salt is not confined to that little shaker in the centre of the dinner table. Salt is used in many different ways. Salt mixed with water, known as 'saline solution', is used as a powerful medical tool to clean wounds or aid someone who is badly dehydrated. In ancient times, salt was a valuable trading commodity. Roman soldiers were often paid in salt, with 'sal' being the Latin word for salary.

In Matthew 5:13, the theme of salt is taken up by the Lord Jesus and is used to describe the Christian. 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' Salt has an effect on the things that are around it. If you are a Christian, you should also have an effect upon and be an influence for good in the lives of those around you. So, let us make some comparisons.

The number one use for salt in the United States is surprisingly not for food, but rather it is to grit the roads during the winter months. It is scattered as a safety precaution to melt snow and ice to prevent injury and loss of life for those travelling about in their vehicles. What a picture of the Christian! By the scattering of words in a witness for the Lord, the Christian can help the unsaved from sliding further into sin and destruction by pointing them to the Lord Jesus. Colossians 4:6 reads, 'Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.'

In a bygone era, salt was used widely as a food preservative. It contains qualities that dispel the growth of harmful bacteria that would otherwise cause foodstuffs to become inedible. Again, what a picture of the believer. Christians

should be an influence for good as they, by their example, seek to curb the destructive, sinful behaviour found in wider society.

In the culinary world, chefs use salt in cooking to enhance the aroma of certain dishes. Salt is also a favourite for seasoning food. It even helps to suppress ingredients that might normally be bitter to the taste. Again, what a good illustration of true Christianity. Believers should be pleasant and full of sweetness and do all they can to drive away bitterness.

God's people have a very important role to play in winning others to the Saviour. Great care must then be taken by Christians to never lose their saltiness. The Lord Jesus warns that if such is the case, then believers that are not salty will be good for nothing.

## QUIZ

Salt is just one of the many ingredients found in the kitchen. Look up the references below to find

more cooking ingredients mentioned in the Bible. Then use the letters found in the highlighted spaces to spell out something we all like to eat.

2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 9:9

Ruth 3:2

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:2

Psalms 119:103

**ANSWER:**

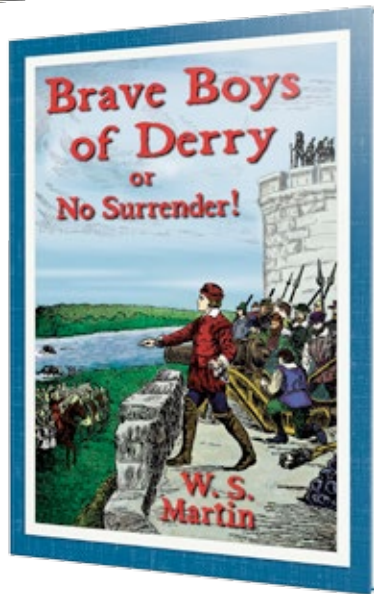



Are you 12 or under? Send your **answer, name, address and church** to:  
**Rev Garth Wilson** e: [answer@fpvision.org](mailto:answer@fpvision.org)

BOOK REVIEW

# BRAVE BOYS OF DERRY OR NO SURRENDER

BY W. S. MARTIN



W. S. Martin highlights the importance of knowing these events and writes in an easy-to-read, fluid and simple way. If you are someone who is not used to reading, then this book would be a great start. I found that – as someone who reads regularly - I could read this volume in one sitting; and I know that others, even if it takes a little longer, will enjoy the experience for themselves. I must warn you, it is the type of book that once you pick it up, you will find very hard to put down! It is not just a collection of dusty old facts that one laboriously slogs through; it is written as a story (all of it true) and is so vivid, that you will be disappointed that the book has ended!

Unfortunately, reading is not a popular pastime with many people anymore - either old or young; but that is such a shame because books have a wonderful way of opening up the mind to new and exciting realms of knowledge. The Apostle Paul loved reading; that is why he says in 2 Timothy 4:13 -

‘when thou comest, bring with thee... the books’ - and in 1 Timothy 4:13 he exhorts us to ‘give attendance to reading.’

Personally speaking, I love the way a good biography and a well-written historical narrative allow the imagination to get into the full flow as you picture the events that the author is describing.

The book *Brave Boys of Derry or No Surrender* is one of those books. It is written for young people from an Evangelical Protestant perspective and, from the very start, will capture the interest of the reader. It is only sixty-nine pages in total, covering six main chapters and is sprinkled with illustrations that aid the reader’s imagination.

Now some may be scratching their heads and wondering why I have chosen this book out of all the books in my library. Well, very simply, it is because the events that took place at Londonderry in 1688-89 have a huge bearing on our civil and religious liberties today. I have no problem in arguing the point that today we only have the freedom and liberty to attend Church, read our Bibles, be Free Presbyterians and hold to the Reformed Protestant Faith because of the courageous stand of the brave thirteen Apprentice Boys all those years ago.

I am perfectly aware that history is not everyone’s ‘cup of tea’; but I would encourage you to remember that history shapes the present and the future. Sir Winston Churchill – our famous wartime Prime Minister – had this to say concerning history: ‘The further back you can look, the further forward you are likely to see.’ But the most important and significant reason I bring this book before you is because it will leave you overwhelmed at the bravery of our Bible-believing Protestant forefathers, and it will cause you to be alert to the often similar and continuous attacks of the devil throughout time. It will also leave you overjoyed at the goodness of God toward our forefathers and ultimately toward us today.

On a more practical note, the book was published and then re-published by Mourne Missionary Trust (an outreach of Mourne Free Presbyterian Church), and copies can be obtained from Beulah Book shop in Newcastle. With no exaggeration, this is one of my favourite books in my extensive library. I have read it and re-read it several times, and I am certain that each reader will be blessed as a consequence of purchasing and reading this wonderful volume. I cannot recommend this excellent book more highly. It is my prayer that many will avail themselves of this opportunity and read this book. You will not regret it! I leave you with words from the author’s pen – W. Stanley Martin: ‘The thrilling story of the siege of Londonderry should never be forgotten by all true lovers of liberty. Although it is a story of long ago, it is full of lessons for the present.’ ■

✍ **Rev Daniel Henderson,**  
*Moneyslane Free  
Presbyterian Church.*



# Untold Billions are Still Untold!

**T**he global population passes eight billion people! According to a United Nations report, that very significant event took place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The same report also suggests that, in 2023, India will surpass China as the world's most populated country.

It is believed that the global population passed one billion in 1804, and it reached the last great milestone of seven billion people in just October 2011. Therefore, in approximately two hundred and twenty years, there has been a global population increase of seven billion people, with the last one billion of that increase taking place in just the past eleven years!

An increase in the world's population brings with it all sorts of questions and challenges for nations and governments, especially the questions regarding the vital issues of poverty, housing, health, and the provision of food.

But the size of the world's population should also be of special interest to the Church - these vast, almost incomprehensible numbers for the Christian, should not be just mere statistics. Never forget that each person, whatever their nationality or social standing, has a soul to be reached for Christ. Therefore, that means that there are now across the face of earth more than 8 billion souls, most of whom are still in spiritual darkness.

The Saviour declared, 'the harvest truly is plenteous' (Matthew 9:37), and this new level of world population brings that truth home to our hearts and should speak powerfully to every Christian. The work to be done in the great spiritual harvest fields of the earth is vast, and it is increasing dramatically.

What should the response of the Church be to the global population as it reaches new and unprecedented levels?

## COMPASSION

We are told of our Saviour, 'But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them...' (Matthew 9:36). What a challenge - here is the love of Christ for lost souls. When the Saviour saw the great numbers of people all around Him, His response was not cold or indifferent, but rather He had a heart of deep compassion. Take time to ask yourself, do you have the same heart for the multitudes of lost souls all around you?

The Apostle Paul did not go to Athens as a sightseer, but as a soul-winner. When he preached his great sermon on Mars Hill, he was looking straight up at the great Greek Acropolis.

It was the most striking building in Athens, but he made no mention of it, because what Paul saw were the souls to be reached for Christ. In fact, he did not just see the souls, but he had a great burden for them. We are told, '...his spirit was stirred in him,

when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry' (Acts 17:16).

The Scotchman William Chalmers Burns, who was a friend and contemporary of Robert Murray McCheyne, became a missionary to China and was a mentor to Hudson Taylor founder of the China Inland Mission. When he was just a young lad, his mother took him with her to Glasgow on a busy market day. As they walked through the crowds, young William went missing. Just think of the mother's concern as she frantically searched for him! After a few anxious minutes, she found him standing down a side ally, with tears running down his young face. In her Scottish accent, she asked him, 'What ails ye, laddie?' The reply that he gave is deeply moving because he declared, 'the tramp of these Christless feet, on the road to a Christless eternity is almost breaking my heart!' There are times when we are in town we just think of the crowds as a hindrance or a nuisance! May the Lord give us a heart that is deeply burdened and concerned for their lost condition.

## COMMISSION

When the Saviour plainly declared, '... Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature' (Mark 16:15), He was teaching the Church its responsibility to the great numbers of lost souls in all the nations of the earth. They were to go to those people with the message of the Gospel.

It is sometimes suggested that the Great Commission was just for the Apostles and the New Testament Church. But that is a serious mistake and one the devil effectively uses to discourage missionary expansion. When the Saviour promised those who were going to the nations to preach the Gospel, ‘...lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world’ (Matthew 28:20). He gave to the Church the pledge of His presence right to the very end of the world. The Saviour intended that the Great Commission would continue to be fulfilled by every succeeding generation of the Church right until that time. So be in no doubt, the Great Commission is still in force.

It was Hudson Taylor who popularised the term ‘the Great Commission’ through his famous quote, ‘the Great Commission is not an option to be considered, it is a command to be obeyed’. The American Bible teacher Charles Swindoll put it like this, ‘Whatever we do, we must not treat the Great Commission, like it is the great suggestion!’ But many Christians and Churches do. God has done more than just suggest that we take the Gospel to all the people of the earth, it is His Divine command.

If God is calling you to go and dedicate your life as a missionary, then let me urge you to respond as Isaiah the Prophet did, ‘Here am I send me’ (Isaiah 6:8).

### **CRY**

When you get a vision of the souls that are perishing, what is the first thing that you should do?

The answer is to cry out to God in prayer to send labourers. There is only one way to meet the need of a lack of labourers, and that is by earnest prayer. The Lord Jesus taught that when He said, ‘Pray

ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest’ (Matthew 9:38). Here is a command that is often overlooked and forgotten. It is clear that new workers and new missionaries being raised do not just happen; it only comes about in answer to prayer. We need to pray for labourers. We must ask the Lord to send the right labourers. May this cry go up from the prayer meetings again in all the Churches.

The American missionary Lottie Moon once heard a message where the Pastor urged the congregation to pray for more missionaries to be raised up. Lottie was burdened by what she heard and obeyed the message and started to pray for workers. But as she did, she heard the Lord say to her personally, ‘You go!’. At first, she was startled, but she came to realise that God was calling her to be a missionary.

The same thing happened to the disciples. The Lord taught them to pray for labourers and as they prayed, He sent those same disciples into missionary work among the Jews (compare Matthew 9:37&38 with Matthew 10:5&6). The people He told to pray were the same people He sent to labour.

Perhaps that is how you find yourself; you are to be commended for earnestly praying for new workers. But the Lord may want you to do more than pray. It could be that God wants you to be the answer to your own prayers.

There is a chorus that we sometimes sing, ‘Untold millions are still untold, Untold millions are still outside the fold’. When we consider that the earth’s population now is more than 8 billion souls, we must revise those words and sing, ‘Untold billions are still untold, Untold billions are still outside the fold’.

In light of that very solemn truth, you need to ask yourself the challenging question - what am I doing to reach them for Christ? ■

✍ **Rev David McMillan,**  
*Armagh Free Presbyterian Church.*



# SUMMER OUTREACH TO LONDON



**Y**oung people, as Pastor of the South Grove Free Presbyterian Church, I warmly invite you to Northeast London to serve Christ together.

If you want to do something for God, then there are plenty of opportunities available for you in this great city, including playing a part in reaching children and young people with the gospel. We have plans for a Holiday Bible Club and Youth Mission during this proposed time of outreach.

Are you skilled in languages? Well, we have over eight nationalities in our congregation with which you can practise your skills. Furthermore, if you play the piano, your talent will not go to waste. That said, no matter which abilities you do or do not have, if you

have the heart to serve the Lord and want to do work for Him, then this outreach trip to London is for you. We believe your presence in London will not only be used by God to reach the lost, but also to refresh the souls of believers in our congregation.

In addition to outreach, other activities have also been planned, including learning something of the rich gospel history in the city, and we trust the whole experience will be a blessing to your soul as well as ours.

May the Lord even be pleased to leave in your heart a love for the mainland, as well as a fire lit in your soul to blaze brightly for the Lord, praying, 'Here am I, Lord. Send me.' The Lord will use a life willing to be used and bless a life wanting to be blessed.

Jeremiah 33:3: 'Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.' ■

✉ **Philip Knowles,**  
*South Grove Free Presbyterian Church.*

## YOUTH COUNCIL MISSION TEAM TO LONDON

**21<sup>st</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

Application forms available online at [fpcyouth.org](http://fpcyouth.org) and on our social media pages. Price to be confirmed. **Questions?** Contact Rev Paul Foster on 0783 7864 320.

## YOUTH COUNCIL DATES 2023

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

**INFORMAL BIBLE STUDY**  
25<sup>th</sup> March, 7.30pm, Martyrs FPC

**MARCH REGIONAL RALLIES**  
10<sup>th</sup> March, 8pm,

- » *Belfast and North Down:* Comber FPC
- » *Mid-Down, Mid-Ulster and South-Down:* Hillsborough FPC
- » *West and South West:* Clogher Valley FPC
- » *North West, North Antrim and South Antrim:* Ballymena FPC

**CASTLEWELLAN RETREAT**  
28<sup>th</sup> April-1<sup>st</sup> May, Ages 17-29  
Cost: £85 (age 19-29), £80 (age 17-18)

**MAINLAND OUTREACH** (age 18+)  
21<sup>st</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> Aug, to London FPC  
See online for cost and further details

**SUMMER OUTREACH NI** (age 16+)  
Mid-August 2023, to Mulvin FPC  
See online for cost and further details

**SUMMER CAMP** (age 12-18)  
31<sup>st</sup> July-4<sup>th</sup> Aug, Greenhill YMCA  
Cost: £180pp

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCYOUTH.ORG





A Word to Women

# ‘Thou God seest me...’

Genesis 16:13

**H**agar was a slave in the household of the very wealthy and influential Abraham. The Lord promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation (Genesis 12:2), but years passed and Abraham remained childless. Sarah, Abraham’s wife, suggested that Abraham could have a child by her maid. It was a common practice at the time, but was without God’s blessing. Hagar did conceive and then, she despised Sarah. The situation became unbearable and, with Abraham’s consent, Sarah punished Hagar severely. All three in the household were at fault in this debacle. Hagar decided her best option was to escape. She had been well fed and clothed in Abraham’s household, but now as a fugitive slave, life would be difficult and dangerous. Stopping for a drink Hagar was confronted by the angel of the Lord. Clearly, the Lord knew all about her, and cared about her and her situation. Hagar recognised the Lord’s authority and submitted herself obediently. She concluded by saying, ‘Thou God seest me’ (Genesis 16:13). This encounter changed Hagar’s life and direction. Let us think briefly about the words spoken to Hagar so long ago.

## THE LORD SEES US IN OUR SIN

Hagar was a slave and had very few rights. She was expected to be submissive and show respect to her mistress. However, when she realised that she was pregnant with Abraham’s child, she could not conceal her contempt for Sarah. It is the Lord who gives or withholds conception. Hagar’s attitude was wrong. The Lord sees every sinful thought, word and deed. In this immoral age, we are inclined to feel superior. We are in danger of being like the Pharisee who prayed boastfully of his good deeds, disparaging the humble and repentant publican. Only the publican’s prayer was heard and answered (Luke 18:10-14). When we pray, we must do so with a humble attitude, and confess daily and seek fresh cleansing from our sins. Avoid pointing the finger at others but, rather, pray for

them, for ‘[t]he effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much’ (James 5:16).

## THE LORD SEES US IN OUR SUFFERING AND SORROWS

Hagar’s lot had not been easy. No one would choose to be a slave. She had no choice over her marriage to her master and the tension with her mistress was not a one-sided affair. We are not told how Sarah punished Hagar, but it was severe. Hagar was beyond upset and took the desperate decision to flee. When she thought that no one cared, the Lord made

His presence known. None are exempt from times of suffering and sorrow. The way ahead may seem hidden and we may be in utter desperation, but remember that the Lord sees us and cares. The Lord Jesus is described as, ‘[A] man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief’ (Isaiah 53:3) and He wants us to bring our sorrows to Him. He offers real comfort and will show us the way ahead. Our tears are in His bottle and recorded in His book (Psalm 56:8).

## THE LORD SEES OUR SATISFACTION AND JOY

The Lord told Hagar about the son she would have and his innumerable descendants. Hagar returned to Abraham’s household and remained there until her son was almost an adult. The Lord watched over her. While this world can be a vale of tears, it can also be a place of joy and contentment. God’s people are meant to be happy, as Psalm 144:15 so eloquently says, ‘[H]appy is *that* people, whose God is the LORD.’

Take heart: whatever our circumstances, the Lord sees us and cares for us. ■

✉ **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.

“  
*When Hagar thought that no one cared, the Lord made His presence known.*  
”

# The Privilege of Tithing

‘Tithing is a burden’, ‘It is a manmade rule’, or ‘The more you give, the richer you will become’ are all misconceptions about tithing. It is important for Christians to be faithful stewards of their possessions. In this age of abundance and high standard of living, it is easy to get caught up with temporal goods and set aside the ministry of willingly giving support to the Lord’s work – a work which God the Son willingly gave His life for.



## THE PURPOSE OF THE TITHE

The word, ‘tithe’ refers to an amount which a person offers to the Lord for the advancement of His kingdom on earth. The Old Testament required multiple tithes to be offered for the upkeep of the tabernacle and temple, to practically support the Levites, and, also, a tithe for the poor (Deuteronomy 14:28).

The tithe has always been God’s chosen way to fund His work. The whole of 1 Corinthians 9 is a response to Paul’s critics who questioned his willingness to receive practical support to carry out his work for God in Corinth. Paul, by inspiration, said, ‘Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn....If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things’ (vs 9 & 11) – referring to their practical support. Later in that same epistle (16:1 & 2), Paul instructed the churches to collect a weekly offering from which financial help would be given to support the Jerusalem saints who were in imminent need.

The Lord could have chosen a number of ways to finance His work, but He chose to use His own people to serve him through giving.

## AN ACT OF WORSHIP

We read in 1 Corinthians 16:2, ‘Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.’ The ‘first day of the week’ is the Christian Sabbath. It is not surprising that the tithe was to be lifted on the worship day as tithing is an act of worshipping with one’s substance.

Like all worship, tithing should be an expression of our love and thankfulness. We give, not because we must, but because we love the Lord and desire His work to proceed and not be hindered by lack of finance. 2 Corinthians 9:7: ‘[S]o let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.’

## GIVE AS GOD PROSPERS

All that we have belongs to God and all that we accomplish is by the gracious, enabling hand of the Lord! We find in Scripture that God does not require us to surrender every coin we possess. In fact, the Lord ‘giveth us richly all things to enjoy’ (1 Timothy 6:17) and this includes our finance. Yet, the Lord does require a portion to be given as a tithe for His work on earth. 1 Chronicles 29:14: ‘[F]or all things *come* of thee and of thine own have we given thee.’

“ *The Lord could have chosen a number of ways to finance His work, but He chose to use His own people to serve him through giving.* ”

Abraham and Isaac gave a tenth of what they had to the Lord. The Levites were required to give a tenth of the tithe they received, and the people used the tenth as a measurement for many of their offerings. Although this pattern of giving a tenth is mentioned in the Old Testament, the New Testament does not specifically comment on the amount we should tithe, other than in 1 Corinthians 16 where the people were instructed to give as God had prospered them – meaning they would give in proportion to how God prospered them. Therefore, the rich would give more and the poor would give less – yet, everyone would contribute.

Realise, then, the privilege and significance of your tithe, and offer it to the Lord, praying that He will accept your humble act of worship and use your tithe to further accomplish His work on earth! ■

✉ **Rev David Brown,**  
Larne Free Presbyterian Church.



# Free Presbyterian Historical Society

## Annual Lecture

The primary role of the Free Presbyterian Church is to preach faithfully the Word of God. Rightly then, the pulpit is always central and our focus is largely forward-looking, as we minister to saints and bring the gospel to sinners. This does not mean, however, that the church ignores its past. There is a place for looking backwards, too. Indeed, Scripture commands this, 'Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee' (Deuteronomy 32:7). The man of God in the Psalms exercised himself in this very matter: 'I remember the days of old' (Psalm 143:5); 'I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times' (Psalm 77:5). The scores of times in which the Bible uses the word, 'remember' is God's way of saying to us, 'Do not neglect the past.'

Therefore, the church must maintain a desire to study its own history. To prove and show the value of this study is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say, the Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church seeks to encourage acquaintance with church history among all believers. Our ministers often address their congregations on relevant historical themes, personalities or events. The Historical Committee has also been appointed by Presbytery to facilitate the research of church history, and to retain and collate historical material relevant to our denomination. The committee has built up an archive of material which it seeks to store safely and appeals for more denominational and congregational ephemera.

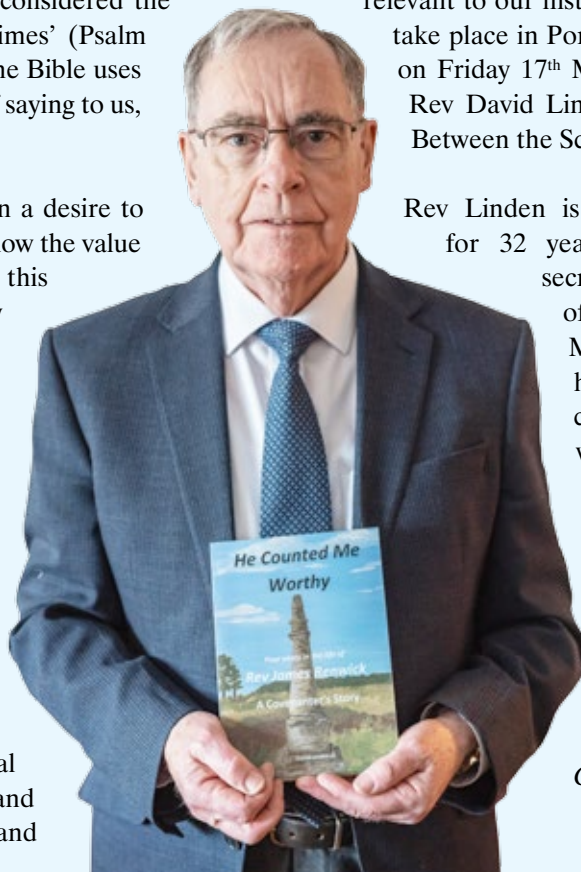
The opening service and constitution of the first Free Presbyterian Church was held at Crossgar on 17<sup>th</sup> March 1951 but, of course, our roots go further back than that and the span of our interest can be traced to the Reformation itself and the progress of orthodox Presbyterianism and sound Calvinism in the British Isles.

The Historical Committee wishes to further encourage interest in church history among our members. Presbytery, therefore, is pleased to announce an Annual Historical Lecture is to be given on or around 17<sup>th</sup> March on a theme relevant to our historic Protestant roots. The first is to take place in Portglenone Free Presbyterian Church on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 8pm. The speaker is Rev David Linden and his subject is: 'The Bond Between the Scottish and Irish Covenanters.'

Rev Linden is a retired minister who pastored for 32 years in Portglenone and was the secretary of the Scottish Commission of Presbytery before it joined the Mainland Commission. Rev Linden has maintained a strong interest in church history, and has spoken and written on the subject. The Historical Committee would warmly invite members, friends and young people of the denomination to support this venture and come to the lecture. Portglenone congregation will kindly provide supper afterwards for all who attend. ■

✉ **Rev Gregory McCammon,**  
*Chairman of the Historical Committee.*

📖 **Left:** Rev David Linden  
with his book, *He Counted Me Worthy:*  
*Forty years in the life of Rev James Renwick*







# Be Still & Know

**I**n times of dogged opposition, the forty-sixth Psalm was one of Martin Luther's favourites. He often said to his 'right hand man', Philip Melancthon, 'Come, let us sing the forty-sixth Psalm and let the devil do his worst.' While it had special relevance for Luther in his day, it is one that the church of Jesus Christ can sing today as its truths still apply in our own troublesome times.

#### **CONFIDENCE IN GOD**

The theme of this Psalm is of faith's confidence in God – confidence in the One whose word spoke this world into existence (Hebrews 11:3). The very One who 'hath prepared (established) his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all' (Ps.103:19). Fixed and immovable is His throne, established by Himself and from which He cannot be deposed by any in heaven or earth. As

sole and sovereign ruler over all, troubles in this world (vs 2&3) cannot impact on Him. His great works in judgment upon the earth (vs 6&8) and those in defence of His people against the rage of their enemies (v9) are but manifestations of His greatness, sovereignty, power and dominion. How challenging then is the command, 'Be still, and know that I am God'(v10). It demands serious consideration and contemplation.

## A COMMAND TO CEASE

In the context of the Psalm, this command is addressed to the nations in general, and the enemies of the church of Jesus Christ in particular. The word translated, 'be still' means 'cease' or 'leave alone'. The same word was used by Elisha when he said to Gehazi, concerning the approach of the Shunammite woman who had come to see him, 'Let her alone' (2 Kings 4:27). God is saying to the nations despising His church and defying Him, 'Restrain yourselves long enough to know that I am God and regulate your conduct accordingly.' As nations rail and rage against Him, they should stop and recognise that He is God alone, realising 'he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?' (Daniel 4:35). As Ruler and Governor of this world's destiny, He is the God who controls all, declaring: 'For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another' (Psalm 75:6&7). His message is: 'I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth' (Psalm 46:10). To be exalted is to be in a position of prominence, and so God is saying He will be exalted among the nations of the earth and brought to a place of honour before all. Such a promise finds its complete fulfilment at the coming again of Jesus Christ, when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

## GOD IN THE MIDST OF HIS PEOPLE

The church here in this Psalm is described as 'the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High' (v4). David built a royal residence on Mount Zion and the concept of Zion as the city of God was extended to the city of Jerusalem. The picture is of the church militant facing persecution (vs 1-3) and fierce opposition (v6), yet knowing God's presence, preservation (v5) and provision (v4). God is in the midst of her (v5) and will never withdraw and leave. When the world is in confusion

**“When storms sweep down upon us on our journey homewards, the clear eye of faith views Him as the refuge or high place from present or imminent danger.”**

at every turn, there is God, in the midst of His people, ensuring the supply of every need no matter what else occurs. The river of His grace has an infinite supply to refresh weary hearts, revive weak souls and restore straying feet. The river that comes from the throne of God and the Lamb is from the One who has life in Himself. His promises, His fellowship and His ordinances, yes, His own living Word are the streams that 'make glad the city of God'(v4). It is a gladness that no physical conditions or external circumstances can alter since they cannot exclude communion with Him and a conscious sense of His presence. 'Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof' (Psalm 46:2&3). So, even if the most permanent things we know of on earth change and we are told not to be fearful, why should any of the lesser cause us to tremble? Fear cripples our walk with God and makes us hesitant in taking each step. Why should our hearts fail for fear? He is ever a God at hand and not a God afar off (Jeremiah 23:23). Faith sees Him as the great I AM, the ever present and unchangeable One in His majestic person, power and purpose – the unchanging God of covenant faithfulness, whatever the time, place or circumstances may be.

## A VERY PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE

Faith's saving relationship with Him brings an assured confidence that He 'is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble' (Psalm 46:1). Our times certainly necessitate having such a comforting bond of trust in Him, enabling us to say, '[T]hou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat...' (Isaiah 25:4). The refuge described by the psalmist is a hiding place where shelter is sought from impending danger.

When storms sweep down upon us on our journey homewards, the clear eye of faith views Him as the refuge or high place from present or imminent danger. He is at our side to guide, uphold and bring to memory a precious promise; or write upon the heart an enlightening truth; or give some captivating glimpse of the One who in all our affliction was afflicted (Isaiah 63:9). There are many situations in which we need help and is God able to help in all or only in a specific few? What comfort that He is our help in 'trouble' or in 'distresses', as the original reads. The plural form takes in multiple troubles that would cause us much care and anxiety. We may ask: will His help really come? We read that God shall help and that 'right early'(v5). These words translate literally as 'when the morning appeareth' or 'at the dawn of the morning'. His help, then, is as sure as morning follows night. Just as 'weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning' (Psalm 30:5), so the timing of His help will be when the darkness seems to have given victory to the assailants. He, at times, suffers opposing powers to arise, just before He shows mercy to His people, so that He can raise a monument of remembrance to His almighty power.

The church of Christ seems to be enduring her night and needs clothed with His power to be the one that 'looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon. . . and terrible as an army with banners' (Song of Solomon 6:10). How blessed then to be a citizen of Zion, an inhabitant of the city of God. The only way to be such is to be born into her and that only by the grace of God (Psalm 87:5&6). We long for the day when His glory will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Christ will then be fully and finally exalted in the earth. Then, all will be still and know that He is God. ■

✉ **Rev Leslie Curran,**  
*Director of Let the Bible Speak.*



# Retirement Dinner

Members of the Mission Board and their wives met in Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November to recognise the retirement of Rev Ian Harris as Chairman and Rev David Park as Secretary. These brethren have a combined service of over 25 years in these important roles. Following a fine meal, various presentations were made to them and their wives. Commenting on the evening, the present Chairman, Rev Colin Mercer, noted, 'It is fitting to give honour where honour is due. The



Mission Board owes a great debt to Revs Harris and Park for their years of service in the missionary endeavour of our church. They have served with tremendous zeal and unflinching interest in the spread of the gospel and much has been accomplished under their leadership. We appreciate the many hours devoted to this labour and,

also, the support they have received from their wives and families.' Mr Alastair Hamilton (Treasurer) spoke of various mission trips that had been taken and the privilege of working alongside his brethren on the Mission Board. In response, Revs Harris and Park expressed thanks to the Lord for His grace and for the opportunity they had been given to serve in their respective roles. They thanked the members of the Mission Board for their support and expressed their gratitude for the kind tokens of appreciation. ■



✍ **Rev Colin Mercer,**  
*Mission Board Chairman.*

📷 **Above:** Rev and Mrs Park & Rev and Mrs Harris. 📷 **Left:** Those who made the presentations at the dinner.

## 25 Years on the Mission Field

January 2023 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Miss Joy Gillespie going to the Mission Field. It was on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1998 that her farewell service took place in Armagh Free Presbyterian Church. Dr Paisley preached at that special service on the subject: 'Being an overcomer'. Miss

Gillespie flew to Spain the following day to commence language studies and take up her labours.

During the last quarter of a century, Miss Gillespie has had the distinction of serving on two foreign mission fields

on two different continents. For the first nineteen and a half years, she laboured in Spain, and, for the last five and half years, she has been labouring in Asia.

On behalf of the denomination, the Mission Board congratulates Miss Gillespie on reaching her silver jubilee of missionary service. We express our sincere thanks for her faithful labours and pray that the Lord will give her many more years of fruitful service. ■



📷 **Photo:** The front cover of the March/April 1998 edition of the *Truth for Youth*.



# 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Missionary Council Weekend



The Missionary Council gathered for their annual weekend in Magherabuoy House Hotel, Portrush. This has been the venue for the past ten years and is set amidst the beautiful scenery of the North Antrim Coast. The weekend was organised by the outgoing Chairman, Rev David Park. Around 110 guests were accommodated at the hotel, with others travelling in for the meetings. Friday night was an informal evening. The fellowship time was opened and closed with prayer by Mr Eric Graham and Mr John Dumigan. Ukrainian visitors attended: Pastor Valentin Pavlenkov along with his wife, Larisa, and their four children.

Friday night, therefore, became a 'Ukrainian Night' with the Pavlenkov family singing, the Pastor testifying, and Rev Park reporting on the project undertaken by his Hebron congregation to receive 41 Ukrainian refugees to Ballymoney. He introduced his visual presentation with the words of the Saviour, 'I was a stranger, and ye took me in' (Matthew 25:35). He then spoke of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the fleeing of these refugees and how God had provided for them in so many ways – truly a story of grace and love.

The main conference service was held on Saturday night as the Council sought to renew its vision for the Great

Commission. Rev Joshua Moffatt conducted congregational singing and Mr Graham led the service. Missionary reports were given by Rev Lyle Boyd (returned home from Spain), Mr Samuel Johnston (Hebron Youth Leader, reporting on the Ugandan VBS), and Mr David McAuley (Whitefield College student reporting on his visit to Uganda). Mrs Rebekah Park was the guest soloist and Mrs Glenda Graham from the Mission Board office testified. Dr John Douglas was the special conference speaker and preached a challenging message with the evident anointing of the Lord.

On the Lord's Day, the worship service was held in Hebron, Ballymoney. A video report was given by Deepanker Nandy on the Indian Orphan Project, and Mr Graham brought personal greetings as the new Missionary Council Chairman and, also, from Rev Colin Mercer, Mission Board Chairman. The special singing was from the Ukrainian Church Choir and the Hebron Youth Choir. Rev Joshua Moffatt preached the Missionary Challenge and hearts were touched and moved. Overall, it was a blessed weekend when the Lord came among us and stirred our hearts. ■

✍ Rev David Park



*“ Give me the love that leads the way,  
The faith that nothing can dismay,  
The hope no disappointments tire,  
The passion that will burn like fire;  
Let me not sink to be a clod;  
Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God. ”*

Amy Carmichael, *Missionary to India*



# From the Treasurer



## Ukraine Aid

*“Thank you for such a generous and compassionate response to help other Christians in their time of great need.”*

One of the highlights last year was, undoubtedly, the speedy and generous response to the Ukraine Aid appeal which was launched in March 2022, following the invasion of Ukraine. As the Mission Board did not have a presence in this area, we decided to



channel all of the support through three partners who work in Ukraine and the neighbouring countries where so many of the refugees sought shelter. These partners are: the Slavic Gospel Association, Faith in Action Missions and Betania Baptist Church, Timisoara.

I am pleased to report that, by the end of 2023, we had raised a total of £123,228.87, which was passed to the

three partners for distribution. You can read reports of how this funding was used at [www.sga.org.uk](http://www.sga.org.uk) and [www.faithinactionmissions.com](http://www.faithinactionmissions.com) for your encouragement.

Thank you for such a generous and compassionate response to help other Christians in their time of great need. The appeal remains open, as, sadly, the difficulties in Ukraine are ongoing. ■

## Banking Update

We receive many calls from supporters asking how they can send funds to assist the work of the Mission Board. The best, most cost effective and quickest way to send funds is by direct bank transfer. Over the past few years, we have expanded the means by which you can donate to support the work – most recently, with the addition of the ‘Donate’ function on our website at [www.fpcmission.org/give](http://www.fpcmission.org/give)

I appreciate that some people still send cheques to the Mission Board



office; however, our local bank branch in Kilkeel has closed recently, which makes the lodgement of these cheques more difficult. I would, therefore, like to encourage as many as possible to consider changing over to use bank transfers to help overcome these issues. These are easy for you to set up and manage, and much easier for us to track

to ensure that the funds get allocated to the correct area, according to your wishes, as a donor. I would specifically encourage all church treasurers to consider this method of transfer. If you would like to use this system, please contact Glenda in the Mission Board office and she will provide you with all of the details. ■



## MISSIONARY VISION

### Child Sponsorship

Emmanuel Christian School, Uganda



To all of those who have sponsored children, let me take this opportunity to thank you for your vital support in the ministry of Emmanuel Christian School. Through your sponsorship, poor and vulnerable children are receiving a high-quality, Christian education. Children from different faiths and backgrounds attend the school and many, over the years, have professed faith in our Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ, having heard the gospel during their time at the school.

The current increase in the 'cost of living' is being felt at home and abroad, and has hit Uganda hard. Food inflation there is expected to be 27% this year, and we are already feeling the impact of this change in the escalating running costs at the school. As a result, the cost of sponsoring a child at Emmanuel

Christian School will increase to £140 per year (£112.00, if Gift Aided). If you provide monthly sponsorship support, then the monthly cost will rise from £10/month (£8.00, if Gift Aided) to £11.66/month (£9.34, if Gift Aided).

We thank you, again, for your support and we would encourage new supporters to consider this very direct and tangible way to support the children in Uganda. ■

## Easter Convention Saturday Night Missionary Rally

The Presbytery has recently decided to recommence in 2023 the Missionary Rally on the Saturday night at the Easter Convention in the Martyrs Memorial Church in Belfast.

The Easter Convention from the very beginning has always had a very strong missionary emphasis, and, for many years, the Saturday night Missionary Meeting was eagerly anticipated and a source of great blessing.

Reinstating the Saturday night meeting will allow the full meeting to be given

over to highlighting all the current developments of the missionary work of our denomination.

The meeting will include missionary reports and updates, incorporating some video updates. There will also be a message from the Word of God to present the missionary challenge.

The Mission Board and Missionary Council is very pleased by this development and would encourage you to plan to join them on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April at 7:30pm. ■



### 2023 EASTER MISSIONARY RALLY

**MARTYRS MEMORIAL FPC**  
Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April, 7:30pm

*Missionary reports & a missionary message.  
Light refreshments afterwards*

*'... Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. . .'*

**John 4:35**

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# Easter Convention

Organised by:

**FREE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF ULSTER**

Hosted by:

**MARTYRS MEMORIAL FPC**

## APRIL 2023

**FRIDAY 7<sup>th</sup>, 7.30PM  
YOUTH FOCUS**

*Singing: Mr Stephen Greer &  
Miss Charlotte Caughey  
A light supper will follow*

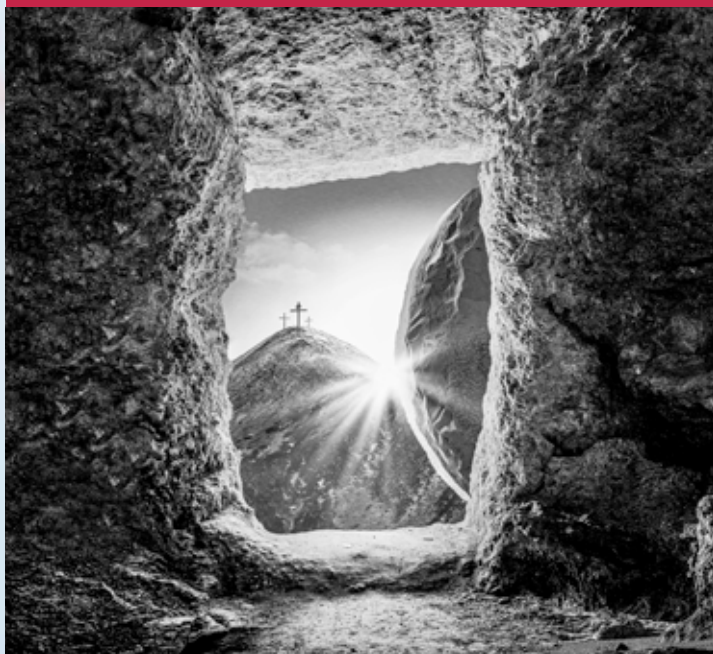
**SATURDAY 8<sup>th</sup>, 8.00PM  
MISSIONARY RALLY**

*A light supper will follow*

**MONDAY 10<sup>th</sup>, 8.00PM  
CONVENTION RALLY**

*Singing: Mr Jonathan Logan &  
United Christian School Choir  
Kids' Club will run during this meeting.*

*Various Speakers*



# Dates For The Diary

## MARCH

11<sup>th</sup>

**MAGHERAFELT FREE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
ANSWERS IN GENESIS**

*(hosted by the Youth Fellowship)*

*Time: Saturday 8.00pm*

*Speaker: Mr Simon Turpin*

*Subject: Responding to Scoffers Who Overlook  
Creation and the Flood*

## APRIL

2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>

**ANNALONG FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
PRE-EASTER GOSPEL MEETINGS**

*Subject: Christ's Pathway to the Cross*

*Time: Sunday 6.00pm, Monday - Thursday 8.00pm*

*Speaker: Rev Thomas Martin*

16<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup>

**MULLAGHGLASS FREE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
GOSPEL MISSION**

*Venue: Tullyhappy Orange Hall*

*Time: Sunday 7.00pm, Monday - Friday 8.00pm*

*Speaker: Rev William McCrea*

16<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>

**SIXMILECROSS FREE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
GOSPEL MISSION**

*Time: Sunday 3.30pm, Monday - Friday 8.00pm*

*Speaker: Rev Thomas Martin*

23<sup>rd</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>

**PORTGLENONE FREE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
MINISTRY MEETINGS**

*Speaker: Dr Ron Johnstone*

*Subject: The High Priest's Garments*

*Time: Monday - Friday 8.00pm*

Free Presbyterian  
**VISION**

