

Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

Roots of Biblical Reformation

Revive Thy
Work O Lord
Co. Armagh

Facing New
Beginnings

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Editorial

Recently, it occurred to me that 2023 marks the tenth anniversary of our denomination's magazine, Free Presbyterian Vision. Although a decade is not a substantial amount of time, yet it is enough time for change to take place. As I perused some of the archives, it sobered me to think of the many changes which have taken place in our church family. Some men and their families have moved countries in the service of God, while others have entered into retirement. Some of them have been called home to glory, while new faces have been called into our College to study. We all can look back, raise our Ebenezer unto the Almighty, and recognise that God has been pleased to preserve a faithful witness for years to come.

In the 2013 inaugural magazine, Rev Timothy Nelson (the first editor) drew the readers' attention to the word 'Vision' in the title FP Vision. He pointed out that this word which is used in Proverbs 29:18 refers to the prophetic, spoken Word. Where there is the absence of the faithful preaching of God's Word, the people will perish.

As we look ahead to the end of this year and seek by God's grace to plot a course through the rest of this decade, it is vital for all, young and old, to promote the faithful teaching of God's Word. We must not take for granted the Bibles we have in our homes and the many truths that have been hidden away in our hearts. The majority of people today are concerned with economic pressures or turbulence among the nations; but for the church of Christ, there must be an increased appetite for the faithful proclamation of truth unchanged and unchanging. Decades come and go, but the Word of God stands forever. ■

✉ Editor
editor@fpvision.org



“My prayer is for unity in our Presbytery and throughout our congregations. If we work together, then, with the Lord's blessing, we can be successful.”

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God Ordering Our Steps

1 Kings 17:1-3

The prophet Elijah, having delivered God's message to King Ahab, must have wondered what his next step would be. Would his next step be to go to the palace and throughout the land, which was oppressed by false worship, proclaiming that 'the Lord God of Israel liveth'? Such a glorious message of a living Saviour was proclaimed later on Mount Carmel in I Kings 18. But before that stage of Elijah's life, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, 'Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan' (1 Kings 17:3).

I doubt that Elijah had thought about going to dwell at a brook or river for a while. Therefore, he was guided by the Word of the Lord concerning the next step in life and the next course of action to take. Elijah was simply to trust and obey the authority of God's Word and allow the Word of the Lord to direct

his path, even if it was not the path he would have chosen for himself. Elijah had to learn that God's way is perfect.

Believer, when you listen to the Word of God, as it is read and preached, and then obey it, the Lord will give you the next step and course of action to take. We must learn that the Lord does not reveal the second step until there has been obedience in the first. The Lord was teaching Elijah to walk by faith and not by sight. We find that hard at times! How often we walk by sight; we like to be in control of the way ahead. We like to know the whole journey.

When we are in a situation where we do not know what to do, remain faithful, and when the Lord wants us to move location or take the next step, the Word of the Lord will come to us. The Psalmist spoke of this in Psalm 37:23: 'The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way'.

God brought Elijah aside for a time of preparation; God was preparing him at the brook for Mount Carmel. He prepared Elijah in private to use him in public. Waiting upon the Word of the Lord is never wasted time; rather, it saves time and saves a life from going along a wrong path. If Elijah had missed or disobeyed the word of the Lord, he would have been unprepared, unready, underpowered, and unsuccessful in public service on Mount Carmel.

Believer, keep waiting upon the Word of the Lord, because God is preparing and leading you day by day for the work He will perform through you. Listen to the Word of the Lord in private, and you will live out the Word of the Lord in public. Learn the Word of the Lord in secret, and you will lean upon the Word of the Lord in service. ■

✍ **Rev Philip Knowles,**
*South Grove Free Presbyterian Church,
London.*

Interview with the New Moderator

Rev Samuel Murray

Rev Samuel Murray was recently elected as the Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster. He is married to Karen, and they have two children and four grandchildren. Recently, he kindly agreed to be interviewed for the *Free Presbyterian Vision*.

Editor



ED: Tell us a little about your conversion to Christ.

SM: I had the privilege of being brought up in a Christian home, and my parents ensured that I attended children's meetings, which I really enjoyed and where I heard the Gospel. After much soul searching, Dad and Mum separated from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and started attending Moneyslane Free Presbyterian Church on 26 December 1966. I was only a boy of eleven; but, to this day, I can still remember the impression that the hearty singing in Moneyslane had upon me on that Boxing Day. I was not used to this.

Three weeks later, on 16 January 1977, I came under deep conviction of sin as I listened to the testimony of Mr Clifford Jenks. At home that night, I repented of my sin and trusted in the finished work of Christ for salvation.

ED: Are there any particular influences in your life that you thank God for?

SM: First and foremost, my father and mother. They brought me up in the ways of the Lord and, by their sacrifices for me, exhibited the love of Christ and taught me to make sacrifices for others.

I am thankful for the principal in Edendale Primary School, Miss Molly Harbinson, who instilled in her pupils the importance of hard work if they wanted to succeed.

I learned so much from God's Word in Moneyslane FPC under my Sunday School teacher, Mr Billy Sterritt, my Bible Class leader, Mr Robert Mellroy, my Youth Fellowship leader,

Mr Raymond Wright, and my minister, Rev Michael Patrick.

There were also three men under whose influence I came during my time as a student in the Whitefield College of the Bible, and their effect upon me was profound. Dr Douglas emphasised the importance and authority of God's Word. Rev Beggs taught the students not only theology but also, by his example, to be godly and gracious. Dr S B Cooke's lectures on homiletics and pastoral theology were exceptional. I remember them clearly to this day. My first Clerk of Session, Mr Jackie Allister (Comber FPC), was a rock in the early days of my ministry. I am indebted to Jackie for his wisdom and support.

The most important person in my life is my wife Karen who has always supported me in the Lord's work. Never once has she questioned the unsocial hours that I work. I have ministered in three congregations, and each time I received a call, she simply said, 'If the Lord calls you, I am happy to go'. I thank the Lord for her love, commitment, and willingness to leave all and follow Christ.

ED: When were you called into the Christian ministry and what churches have you served in since?

SM: I was called into the ministry at the tender age of eighteen. The Lord called me through the following verses: Proverbs 22:17, Matthew 24:45-46, and Matthew 4:18-22. Some advised me to go to university first and then enter Bible College. The Lord told me to follow Him "immediately." I have never regretted doing what God told me to do. Interestingly, as I struggled with this challenge in Matthew 4, Rev John Greer, the guest preacher in Moneyslane, showed how the Lord had used these same verses to call him to leave Sixmilocross and go to Philadelphia. I knew that the Lord had confirmed His call to my heart that day. Forty years later, I find myself serving in Presbytery alongside Rev Greer.

Presbytery ordained and installed me in Comber FPC on 6 January 1989. The installation in Tandragee FPC took place on 14 September 2004, and I was installed in Portavogie on 14 October 2016. It has been my privilege to serve the Lord in these three wonderful congregations.

ED: What particular aspects about the work of God do you enjoy the most, and which are the most challenging?

SM: Leading a soul to Christ gives incomparable delight to the evangelist. Every preacher of the Gospel would love to see more souls coming to Christ under the preaching of God's word.

Preparing and delivering sermons that the Lord has laid upon my heart, and knowing that they have been an encouragement to God's people, thrills my soul.

I have always enjoyed being among the young people in the churches I have laboured in. Generally, I have found them to be very easy to work with. They are willing to accept Scriptural advice, and my heart has always been blessed by seeing them grow in the Lord.

Pastoral visitation can be exhausting; but it, too, is a blessing to me. It brings me close to the flock and enables me to enter into the difficulties and trials they face. Knowing the struggles that they come up against and leaning on the Lord's guidance, it is my desire that the Word preached might be a balm to the souls of needy hearers.

Some ministers might call me mad, but I enjoy building projects. The Lord has allowed me to have a hand in the design and construction of the church building in Comber, as well as the new church and halls in Tandragee. Upon completion of the scheme in Tandragee, I believed that I would never undertake such a project again. Not for the first time, I was wrong. Plans are underway to tackle another building programme in Portavogie.

I find it extremely challenging to find the time to do all things well. Life is very busy, and I fear doing anything by half; the Lord deserves the very best that I can give Him.

ED: Tell us about some of the other roles you have had in our Presbytery and how they broadened your own ministry.

SM: Presbytery has always encouraged me and given me additional opportunities to serve the Lord. Shortly after ordination, I was appointed to the Government and Morals Committee. Rev Leslie Curran asked me to assist with LTBS deputation meetings. Some time later, I became President of the Youth Council. I also succeeded Rev Beattie as Chairman of the Finance Committee. I had the privilege of serving on the Whitefield College Commission and the College Management Committee. Presently, I sit on the Academic Committee of the College and lecture in Pastoral Theology. I have also served on the Book of Church Order Committee.

These additional roles have given me an invaluable insight into the workings of our Presbytery, and doubtless I will be compelled to call upon these experiences in carrying out the duties of Moderator. There are areas of the Free Presbyterian witness that I have not been directly involved in and, therefore, will need the assistance of my more experienced brethren in these matters.

My various experiences of Presbytery life have taught me that there is much more to the Lord's work than our own little hobby horses. The work is vast; and even though, as servants, we vary somewhat and have different priorities, we must work together in the field to gather in the harvest. So, if we are to succeed, we must dwell together in unity and labour for the Master, for the night cometh when no man can work.

ED: Why is the cause of the Free Presbyterian Church so close to your heart?

SM: I believe in the separated stand of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster. I am convinced that Presbyterian Church government is Scriptural; and I love Calvinistic, reformed truth. I value the teaching of the Children's and Shorter Catechism and cherish the standards of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Articles of Faith of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster. I believe in the free offer of the Gospel; and, most significantly, I was saved through the witness of the Free Presbyterian Church. God has blessed me in and through this denomination. I have been in it since I was eleven, and it is woven into every single part of my life.

ED: Going forward, what are you most looking forward to in this new role of Moderator?

SM: My prayer is for unity in our Presbytery and throughout our congregations. The words "United we stand, divided we fall" are so true. If we fight each other, we will fail. If we work together, then, with the Lord's blessing, we can be successful. ■



Roots

of Biblical Reformation

“
*Reformation begins with God.
The light of it is the light of Christ;
for He only ‘is the fountain of life’,
and only in His ‘light shall we see light’.*
”

A Biblical reformation is a work whereby God brings His church back to the Bible and Scriptural worship. Accompanying reformation is a new lease of spiritual life whereby the church burns more brightly. This life overflows from the church into the community, bringing a wonderful increase in converts. A Biblical reformation is transforming and leads sinners to spiritual light, life, and likeness to God.

Before the Protestant Reformation, the motto of Geneva had been *Post tenebras spero lucem*— ‘After darkness, I hope for light.’ When the Reformation arrived, a new motto appeared on Geneva’s coins. The verb was deleted, and the text now read *Post tenebras lux*— ‘After darkness, light!’ The people thus testified that through Divine grace they had at last found what once, in their gross darkness, they could only hope for.

While Biblical reformation dispels darkness, deadness, and depravity, it does not do this absolutely and completely in our fallen world. Geneva and all nations blessed by the Protestant Reformation could do with further reformations. Indeed, it is true that the church can never cease reforming. Reformation, while it brings a most welcome change, does not bring the change of glorification. We must wait for the resurrection of

the dead for that. Only the return of Christ in power and glory brings the fullness of transformation. As John said, 'We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is' (1 John 3:2). Paul likewise affirms what alone brings us into the arena of sinless glory, 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory' (Colossians 3:4).

While Biblical reformation does not bring the glory that never ceases and needs no revival, nevertheless its spiritual blessedness is such that it brings a foretaste of glory. Reformations are times of Divine visitation. They are times of refreshing from God's presence when He says, 'I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing' (Ezekiel 34:26). Reformation by the grace of God brings to communities the light of God's Word and spiritual awakenings that lead to faith and repentance. By it, men are led to the life of regeneration and the work of sanctification. Sinners are led to the knowledge of the Holy One and to the desire to be holy like Him.

ROOTED IN THE TRIUNE GOD

Seeing this is what Biblical reformation is, it follows that its roots can only be founded in the Triune God. Reformation begins with God. The light of it is the light of Christ; for He only 'is the fountain of life', and only in His 'light shall we see light' (Psalm 36:9). God must pour out the life abundant upon a dead world. He commands the blessing, even life forevermore (Psalm 133:3). In the complexity of the Divine providence around the Protestant Reformation there were many persons, events, motions, and movements. On the surface, the works of God are marvellous and great, but they are infinitely manifold and deeply unfathomable. As the Scriptures say, 'Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number' (Job 5:9). The roots below, however,

are simple and straightforward, because at the foundation is God. Reformation is God working mightily in His providence, by His Holy Spirit, through His inspired Word, and on the grounds of the mediatorial work of the slain Lamb enthroned in glory.

ROOTED IN GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE

Biblical reformation is founded on the decrees of God. As the Shorter Catechism teaches, 'The decrees of God are His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby for His own glory, he hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass'. God's work of providence brings all the purposes of God to pass. We are sure that Biblical reformation, whereby the Lord purifies and enlarges His church, is certainly part of that. God has His set times to visit Zion (Psalm 102:13). Reformations and revivals loom largely in the Lord's plans as He builds His church.

ROOTED IN THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST

Biblical reformation is founded in the mediatorial work of the Son of God. There is no life without the precious blood of Jesus Christ. He is the Resurrection and the Life, and that life flows to us from His wounded side, with the water and the blood of His powerful, once for all sacrifice. All the riches of grace, including those accompanying reformation and revival, are from and by Christ. Not one sinner is saved, and not one saint is revived and enlarged, apart from the risen and ascended Lord. None would even have a remote interest in the living God apart from the intercessory and mediatorial reign of Christ at God's right hand. It is because Christ ever lives to make intercession for sinners on the grounds of His blood that they are brought to faith at all. If converts are multiplied in reformation times, it is for Christ's sake alone.

ROOTED IN THE SPIRIT'S POWER

Biblical reformation is founded in the power of the Holy Spirit. We have no doubt that the 16th century witnessed what was a mighty working of the

Holy Spirit in marvellous grace. We know there were many human causes and other factors in a multiplicity of areas, but the great thing was the Holy Spirit's convicting and illuminating the minds and hearts of sinners. It is as Zechariah 4:6 says, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.' It is not, 'Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high' that the wilderness becomes 'a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest' (Isaiah 32:15). As Ezekiel 37 teaches, it is only when God puts His Spirit in sinners that He brings them out of their spiritual graves into the life of union with Jesus Christ. 'I shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live' (Ezekiel 37:14).


ROOTED IN THE WORD OF GOD

Biblical reformation is founded in the inspired and infallible Word of God. There is no reformation without and apart from God's Word. The Bible will always be found central to any saving movement of God. Indeed, in some respects the Protestant Reformation might be described, 'The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it' (Psalm 68:11). The Reformation was marked with an interest in the original's languages of Scripture, and a burden to use the newly invented printing press to get the Scriptures to the nations in faithful translations. A new vision gripped learned men like Erasmus, who said, 'I want even the lowliest woman to read the Gospels and the Letters of Saint Paul. I want them to be translated into all languages, so that they can be read and understood by Scots and Irishmen, by Turks and Muslims. Making people understand what Christianity teaches is surely the first step to converting them. Perhaps many will mock the Scriptures, but some will take them to heart'. Yes, and blessed be the most High God, by the Holy Spirit, by Christ's blood and intercession, and by the sovereign election of God, many did take them to heart. ■

✍ **Rev Gregory McCammon,**
Ebenezer Free Presbyterian Church,
Gilford.


Appointments and Achievements in Ballymena




 **Left:** The Ordination and Installation of Mr Rodney McCosh and Mr Sammy Coulter (front centre) as ruling elders in Ballymena Free Presbyterian Church took place on Lord's Day 18th June.

Both Mr McCosh and Mr Coulter previously served as deacons. Included in the photograph are the Rev James Beggs, Rev John Greer, Rev Andrew Stewart, and members of the Kirk Session.




 **Above:** Pictured alongside Rev John Greer, Mr James McCosh, and Rev Andrew Stewart are (L to R) Zac Hanna, Eddie McClintock, Esther McClure, Eden Mitchell, Jude Ferguson, James McClintock, and Ethan O'Melvena. Each child received a certificate, cup, and Bible on Children's Day for reciting the complete Child's Catechism.



 **Above:** Pictured alongside Rev Greer and Rev Andrew Stewart is Bethany Hanna, who recited the entire Shorter Catechism. Bethany was presented with a certificate, cup, Bible, and prize for her achievement.


Sunday School Excellence in Markethill



 **Above:** Alex, Chloe, Chloe and Martha of Markethill Free Presbyterian Church are pictured alongside their Sunday School Superintendent, Mr Alan Hopps. They each successfully recited the Child's Catechism.

Correct Answers in Ballynahinch




 **Above:** Pictured (L to R) is Garth Craig (Clerk of Session), Hazel Petland (Sunday School teacher), Rev Stephen McCrea and Sunday School Superintendent, Stephen Moore. In front of them is Faith Moore holding her certificate, having successfully recited the Child's Catechism.

Installation of Rev Timothy Ormerod in Ballygowan

The church was filled to capacity on Friday evening 30th June as family, friends and members joined with the congregation in Ballygowan to witness the installation of their new minister Rev Timothy Ormerod. The Moderator, Rev John Armstrong, brought the charge to the newly installed minister under the title 'A Christlike Minister.' At the end of the meeting presentations to Rev T Ormerod and Rev S Murray (Interim Moderator) and their wives were made by members of the Ballygowan congregation. A sumptuous supper was provided and enjoyed by all who attended. ■



 **Above:** Rev and Mrs Ormerod, their children along with the Ballygowan Session.

Honours in Antrim



Congratulations to Sophia Brown and Daniel Cupples for reciting the full Child's Catechism word perfectly and receiving their honours certificate. They are pictured with their minister Rev Paul Thompson, Sunday School Superintendent Mr Stephen Wright, and their Sunday School teacher Mrs Lisa Foulger. ■

Christian Workers Training Academy



Venue: [Tandragee FPC](#) (kindly granted)

Date: Thursday 12th October 8pm, running for seven consecutive Thursday evenings with the second term recommencing late January 2024)

Cost: £100 for the entire course with all notes provided.

Application forms available on request.

Contact course co-ordinator **Rev Julian Paterson:**

T. 0770855073

E. cwtacademy@outlook.com

COMPILED BY
ROBERT MCCONNELL



'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone into the world.'

1 John 4:1

Fake Goods

Today, there are many dishonest people in the business world. People seek to catch consumers out by selling them fake goods, especially through the means of internet shopping. What they do is very simple. They take high-end, expensive items and make cheap, inferior copies of them, passing them off as the real thing, but at a greatly reduced price. Sometimes these cheap copies, especially electrical items, can turn out to be very dangerous because of poor wiring or substandard parts. It is always good to be aware of such goings-on and not be drawn into making a grave mistake just because something seems

to be a bargain. If it seems to be too good to be true, then it usually is too good to be true.

Foolish mistakes made over the purchasing of counterfeit goods can cause problems, but worse still is to make foolish mistakes concerning spiritual matters. The devil is a master craftsman at dressing up falsehood and lies and presenting it as the truth. Believing false teachers, who offer some other means of salvation outside of what the Bible has to say, has been the root cause of countless millions being lost in hell for all eternity.

In addition to the production of

fake goods, the world of banking is also very aware that there are criminals who produce fake notes and pass them off as real money. Staff members are trained to detect which notes are real and which are counterfeit. This they do, not by studying all the fake notes, but by studying and getting to know the real notes well. If we study God's Word and know it inside out, then we will quickly spot false religion and false teachers when we see them. May all young believers not only know their Bibles but be faithful guardians of the truth of the Gospel in this day of great delusion and falsehood. ■

QUIZ

COMPLETE THIS BIBLE NAME WORD SEARCH.

Five letters will be left over. Use these remaining letters to spell out the name of a young man who deceived his own father. (Read - Genesis 27)

ANSWER:

PRIZES!

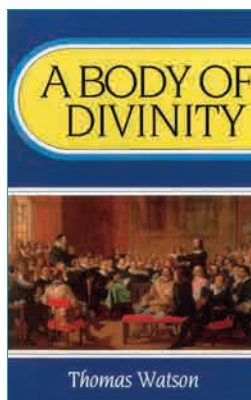
Are you 12 or under?
Send your answer, name, address and church to:
Rev Garth Wilson e: answer@fpvision.org

- Q CAIN
- Q LOT
- Q DAVID
- Q MIRIAN
- Q MANASSEH
- Q JOB
- Q REBEKAH
- Q DAN
- Q ESTHER
- Q TIMOTHY
- Q JOSEPH
- Q ABEL
- Q ISAAZ
- Q ESAU
- Q JUDE
- Q NUN

J	D	T	I	M	O	T	H	Y
C	A	I	N	R	E	I	P	O
	V	M	N	E	D	S	E	E
E	I	I	U	B	U	A	S	S
S	D	R	N	E	J	A	O	T
A	L	I	D	K	L	C	J	H
U	E	A	A	A	C	O	A	E
	B	M	N	H	B		T	R
M	A	N	A	S	S	E	H	B

A BODY OF DIVINITY

BY THOMAS WATSON



When I was preparing to enter the Whitefield College of the Bible, I was kindly gifted a copy of Thomas Watson's famous book, *A Body of Divinity*. The book is an exposition of the early part of the Shorter Catechism. Along with his books on the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, Watson provides us with an exposition of the entire catechism.

Before reading *A Body of Divinity*, I often wondered about the first question and answer of the

catechism. I wondered if the first question was a good starting point. While

I did not question if man's chief end was to glorify God, I did wonder about the statement 'and enjoy Him forever'.

After reading this book, my thinking was radically changed. Watson argues strongly for a God-centred theology and a God-centred focus in daily living. I came to understand the fall in a way I had not understood before, and the glories of the Gospel, that we have been enabled by Christ to live to God's glory and now enjoy the One we once hated. Watson says, 'To glorify God is to have God-admiring thoughts; to esteem Him most excellent, and search for diamonds in this rock only.'

While ministers can make good use of this book, it is accessible to a much wider audience. It is full of statements that in one way are easy to understand, but in another contain such depths of truth. This book unites deep theology with an attractive style of writing, and so is full of beautiful pithy statements and illustrative material.

In his examination of the shorter catechism, Watson not only explains the significance of each doctrine but also shows how the truths logically follow from one another. When dealing with adoption, Watson says, 'The promises are children's bread'. He then says, 'The promises are suitable, like a medical garden, in which there is no disease but there is some herb to cure it'. Using such illustrations throughout the book, we are brought to see the attractiveness of Christ and His Gospel.

When dealing with question 35 relating to Christ's priestly office, Watson opens up the subject of reconciliation bringing sinners peace and joy. He asks, 'What shall we do to obtain this spiritual joy?' He gives

wise counsel about our walk with God, including mourning for sin and daily prayer. He says, 'By close walking with God we get bunches of grapes by the way, which are an earnest of future happiness'. Like other Puritan writers, he has sections on 'uses'. His first use of this theme of joy is 'see that religion is no melancholy thing; it brings joy; the fruit of the Spirit is joy'.

Like other Puritan writers, Watson also took great comfort from God's eternal decree and God's providential actions. He said, 'God has decreed troubles for the church's good. The troubles of God's church are like the angel's troubling the water, which made way for healing His people'. He explained that 'the wheels of Providence often move across to our desires, but still they carry on God's unchangeable decree'. He counselled God's people not to murmur at God's dealings. Such teaching shows us the practical use of theological teaching in our everyday Christian living.

I commend the book heartily to your reading, whether as a digital version or a hard copy. Perhaps you have learned all or

part of the catechism and yet struggle to understand what it is teaching. This book will be of immense help to you in your desire to understand the catechism better; but, more importantly, I trust that the great doctrines of the Word of God will get hold


of you. ■

✉ **Rev Philip Gardiner,**
Perth Free Presbyterian Church, Australia.

“ THIS BOOK UNITES DEEP THEOLOGY WITH AN ATTRACTIVE STYLE OF WRITING, AND SO IS FULL OF BEAUTIFUL PITHY STATEMENTS AND ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL. ”

FACING NEW BEGINNINGS

“
WITH EACH NEW BEGINNING,
THERE COMES THE EXCITEMENT
OF NEW POSSIBILITIES. THIS IS
THE EXCITING PART OF NEW
BEGINNINGS THAT GOD GIVES
US TO ENCOURAGE US TO GO
FORWARD.
”



When Alexander the Great led his army across Asia Minor, he paused at the Khyber Pass in the foothills of the majestic Hindu Indian mountains. Beyond him was the unknown nation of India. Indeed, turning to his troops, he said: ‘We are now marching into the unknown.’ For the lands beyond him, up to that point in time, had not been mapped. In fact, according to his limited knowledge, he was now standing at the end of the world and this caused Alexander to fear greatly.

OBSTACLES

Indeed, this was similar to the Children of Israel because when they came to the end of their forty years of wilderness wanderings, they were facing a land in which they had not been heretofore (Joshua 3:4). In fact, all that lay before them was uncharted. It was new and foreign to them. Looking ahead, all they could see were obstacles. For example, when the Children of Israel camped alongside the River Jordan, the river was at its peak (Joshua 3:15). The melting of the great snowcaps of the mountains of Lebanon had now swollen the River Jordan to two miles wide, and the speed of the river increasing, along with its volume, had now created a furious river. Therefore, when the Children of Israel looked forward into the Promised Land, all they could see was a formidable obstacle – an obstacle for which they were not equipped. They had to camp alongside it for three days and nights which only served to increase their anxiety.

Not knowing what lies ahead, we can instinctively fear the worst. Maybe it is a text message

and you have not opened it yet, but your mind instinctively fears the worst. You think: somebody has fallen out with me, somebody got hurt, somebody got lost, or worse yet, somebody has a job for me to do! Yet, nine times out of ten, it is nothing bad at all. Maybe you are worried about a new job or a new start in a new school and you fear that you will not be able to live up to the expectations of that new start. Maybe you can see the incoming obstacles that you think are too great for you. Well, remember it is natural to fear the worst but also remember most times those fears will come to nothing. When Israel came to the river, the LORD had already rolled it away.

OPPONENTS

Not only did Israel fear the obstacles that were before them but they also feared the opponents that were before them, because as they dwelt beside the River Jordan for those three days, they could also see the city of Jericho. It was a formidable city surrounded by a wall that was 3.6 metres high and 1.8 metres wide. It was a mighty fortress and having a tower that was 8.5 metres high and 9 metres wide, it had added protection. For example, it was situated in the plain of Jordan and had no hills or forests around it for miles. Those living here were able to see an attack coming upon the city. If there was going to be an attack on this city, they would have ample time to get behind those impressive walls. Israel, seeing this and thinking that the ten spies of earlier years had said that there was a lot more of this in the land of Canaan, would have despaired that not only did this new beginning possess obstacles but also opponents.

For us, new beginnings not only possess obstacles, but they also possess opponents. It can be a lot of pressure to meet new people, navigate around a new environment, and learn new things, all at the same time. For example, you might be starting a new school, joining a new club, or it could be your first day of a new job and this can feel particularly daunting, especially if you do not know anyone who is going with you. However, it is important to remember that everyone goes through this and there may even be others presently going through it along with you. But, even if you do meet opponents as Israel did, remember the LORD has not abandoned you. For example, for forty years when Israel travelled throughout the wilderness, the LORD always dwelled amid the camp. When they parked up somewhere for the night, the LORD's tabernacle was erected in the camp; when they travelled somewhere, the Ark of the Covenant was always kept in the midst of the travelling train. But now, as Israel entered into a new beginning, the Ark of the Covenant went before them into Jordan. And so, the LORD will do the same for you. When you enter into your new school or your new job, the LORD has already gone before you in taking on

your opponents. Before you have even set one foot in that school, the LORD has already been there; before you have even spent one second worrying about that opponent, God has already been thinking of him many thousands of years before. Indeed, the hymn writer wrote:

*A thousand savage beasts of prey
Around the forest roam;
But Judah's Lion guards the way,
And guides the stranger home.*

OPPORTUNITIES

Israel also looked forward to the new opportunities that lay before them. For 600 years, the LORD had promised Israel the Promised Land. For 470 years of that promise, Israel had either dwelt in the land of captivity or the desert of the wilderness. But now, in Joshua 3, they were only days from receiving their promised inheritance. You can just imagine the excitement that this must have caused among them. For forty years they had to roam around a wilderness searching for water and a place to sleep, but now they could set up permanent homes in a land flowing with milk and honey.

And so, with every new beginning, there come new opportunities to make new friends, to have new experiences, and to meet new people that you have never known before. With each new beginning, there comes the excitement of new possibilities. This is the exciting part of new beginnings that God gives us to encourage us to go forward. The Christian life is punctuated with new experiences, as the LORD moves us forward in Christian holiness, where we read new passages of Scriptures and enter new territories of service in which we have never been before. Therefore, new beginnings are not something to be avoided, but something to be embraced.

As you stand at the border of another new beginning, whether it is school or a new job, do not be afraid. Joshua was able to say many years later after this new beginning: '[T]he LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass' (Joshua 21:44-45). ■

✍ **Rev Andrew Murray,**
*Ardaragh Free Presbyterian
Church.*



STANDING STRONG

Are you ever tempted to make pleasure and entertainment an idol? To please men instead of pleasing God? To make prosperity and power the goal of your life instead of holiness? If so, then ask the LORD to make you like an oak tree!

When Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast of America on 29th August 2005 its 175mph winds and torrential floods buried the city of New Orleans in water, displaced one million people, and caused \$108 billion worth of damage. And yet amid decimated homes and ruined roads, one thing stood strong against the ferocious wind and floods – the oak tree! For example, out of the 700 oak trees planted in St. Charles Street, New Orleans, 696 survived! This is an endurance rate of over 99%!

The oak tree in Scripture is a symbol of strength and endurance. In Amos 2:9 we read of the phrase, ‘strong as the oaks’ and in Genesis 35 the godly patriarch Jacob hides items under an oak tree knowing the oak tree will endure for generations when other trees will not. So how do oak trees stand strong through hurricanes and how can we endure the hurricane winds of temptation without being decimated and ruined?

1. OAK TREES HAVE DEEP ROOTS

While oak trees can grow up to 100 feet in height and 80 feet in width the roots of an oak tree can be 1.5 to 2 times deeper than their height!

2. OAK TREES DO NOT LET THE FIERCE WINDS GET A HOLD OF THEM

Sensing the wind hit, an oak tree actively curls its leaves into the shape of an ever-increasing Fibonacci sequence thereby diverting the winds passed it.

3. OAK TREES MULTIPLY THEIR STRENGTH BY JOINING FORCES WITH OTHER OAK TREES

Intertwining their lengthy roots below ground, oak trees strengthen one another. This means a hurricane is not blowing against one oak tree on its own but a whole ‘forest of oaks’ (Zechariah 11:2).

What is true physically is also true spiritually. If you want to stand strong through ferocious attacks in this new term of education or work, then take heed to the following:

Firstly, ask the LORD to root your mind in Gospel truth. That while you are a fallible and weak sinner, God the Father loves you with infinite and everlasting love because of Jesus

Christ, God the Father directs you with perfect and all-knowing wisdom, and God the Father is in control of every situation in your life with an all-powerful and sovereign authority.

Secondly, ask the LORD to give your heart a hatred of sin and a love for holiness so that when temptations enter your thoughts you will not dwell on them and let them take hold of you, but you will resist them and replace them with thoughts of that which is true, pure, lovely, virtuous and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8).

Thirdly, ask the LORD to give your will a commitment to not forsake the assembling of yourself with other believers, but to fellowship with them on the Lord’s Day and throughout the week. As believers fellowship together they will not only root each other comfortingly in the Word of God but they will increasingly pray for each other at the Throne of God. The hurricanes will come this autumn and winter. Will you stand strong in the strength of the LORD as described above or will you be decimated and ruined? ■

✉ **Rev Paul Foster,**
President of FPC Youth Council.

YOUTH COUNCIL DATES

More details of each of these events can be found at fpcyouth.org or on Facebook and Instagram at *FPC Youth Council*. Alternatively, speak to your local YF leader or delegate.

NATIONAL RALLY:
Friday 8th September, 8:00pm
Magherafelt FPC

AUTUMN EVENINGS OF PRAYER
Friday 13th & 20th October
Please see online for your local area’s details.

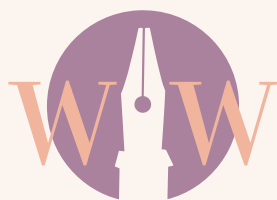
HISTORICAL TRIP TO SCOTLAND
27th - 30th October
Applications are now closed but please pray for the Lord’s blessing.

ENCOURAGEMENT TRIP TO LIVERPOOL
Mid-November
See online for further details.

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCYOUTH.ORG



A Word to Women

Deborah

a Mother in Israel

Deborah was a ‘mother in Israel’ (Judges 5:7) and one of the most influential women in the Bible. She was a famous judge who sat under a palm tree and dealt with the many problems brought to her by the people. She was also a prophetess who knew the mind of God. This is the only time in Israel’s Biblical history that a woman was chosen by God to lead the nation. Furthermore, she is the only woman in the Old Testament who is known for her faith and action, and not because of her relationship with her husband or other men.

Deborah’s name means ‘bee’, and certainly, she lived up to her name. She was not only a judge, a prophetess, a leader, a woman of faith and action, but importantly, she was a wife and a mother. In all her God-given roles, she was as busy as her name suggests. We are not told why God chose a woman as a judge, but undoubtedly, she was greatly used by Him.

For the third time in the period of the Judges, Israel had sinned against the LORD, so He sold them into the hands of their enemies. An old enemy emerged: Jabin, king of the Canaanites, who ‘mightily oppressed the children of Israel’ for twenty years (Judges 4:3). God used nine hundred chariots of iron to bring the Israelites to their knees.

They cried unto the Lord for deliverance. God’s answer was Deborah – an instrument, feeble in the eyes of men, but a woman who was in touch with God. There was not a man in all Israel that God could use, so He chose this woman to champion His cause.

Deborah, instructed by God, told Barak to bring ten thousand troops to Mount Tabor to attack Sisera, commander of the Canaanites, who had chariots of iron and a mighty army. She told him that God would deliver them into his hand. Barak, who should have been a mighty warrior ready for battle, told Deborah that he would only go if she went with him.

Barak knew Deborah was a woman of great faith. She showed unflinching courage, took God at His Word, and went with Barak into the battle. However, Deborah informed him that it would be a woman who would kill their enemy, and so the glory would not be Barak’s, but the Lord’s. We know how the story ends: Sisera flees for his life, takes refuge in a tent, and is killed by Jael. Thus, the Israelites prevailed and lived in peace for the next forty years.

“
*They cried
unto the Lord
for deliverance.
God’s answer
was Deborah –
an instrument,
feeble in the
eyes of men,
but a woman
who was in
touch with
God.*
”

God’s Word governed Deborah’s life, both privately in her personal life, and publicly as a judge in Israel. Undeniably, she was a woman of prayer. Thus, Deborah is a model for every Christian wife and mother.

As women, we are all busy. There seems to be so much to do; sometimes it feels as though there are not enough hours in the day! But do not let the ‘busyness’ of life cause you to miss out on fellowship with the Lord. It can be so easy to be distracted and taken up with our duties and responsibilities that we have no time to read and pray.

Deborah obeyed the Lord without question. After twenty years of oppression, when most of the people lived in fear, God awakened within her a zeal to do something. She became a leader who influenced those around her.

Women like this cannot be hidden. Their influence will go far beyond their own home. Deborah influenced an entire nation! What a responsibility we have to our families and even further afield! We need to continually ask ourselves, ‘What kind of influence am I having on my children, grandchildren, family members, and those around me?’ May God help us to be true ‘mother[s] in Israel’. ■

✉ **Mrs Susan Park,**
*is married to Rev David Park, Hebron Free Presbyterian
Church, Ballymoney.*

The Role of the Elder

Acts 14:23 reveals evidence of the early establishment of the practice of appointing elders in New Testament churches: ‘they ... ordained ... elders in every church’. The reference is to developments virtually at the close of Paul’s first missionary journey, yet these fledgling churches were ready to elect men to the vital office of ruling elder. Other Scriptures are equally clear on the existence of this office (Titus 1:5, Acts 20:17&28, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Philippians 1:1). Therefore, the early emergence of a ruling eldership is discernible. First-century Christian churches, such as those in Crete, Ephesus, and Philippi, elected men to the office of the ruling elder to govern the local churches.

Fundamentally, New Testament elders were commissioned to oversee the administration of the spiritual affairs of Christ’s Church at the local church level. Titus 1:7 states that the bishop or elder is ‘the steward of God’. The Greek word translated as ‘steward’ literally means to arrange a house. Thus, elders are appointed to manage the affairs of God’s house, which is the Church of the living God (1 Timothy 3:15). Specifically, it is spiritual management that is in view. This is clear from 1 Peter 5:1-2 in which Peter writes, ‘The elders which are among you I exhort ... feed the flock of God ... taking the oversight thereof’. The word ‘feed’ also means ‘shepherd’. It signifies to feed, nourish, cherish, and rule. Then, the words ‘taking the oversight’ (episkopountes) are the verbal form of the Greek word for ‘bishop’ (episkopos). Therefore, the men addressed as elders were also bishops and were to pursue the work of both feeding and overseeing God’s flock



“Those who are to give spiritual leadership must be men, in terms of character and behaviour, who are true and faithful to their Great King and Head.”

scattered throughout the regions of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (1 Peter 1:1). The same sense of the elder’s stewardship is in view in the Acts 20 passage mentioned above, where similar language is employed.

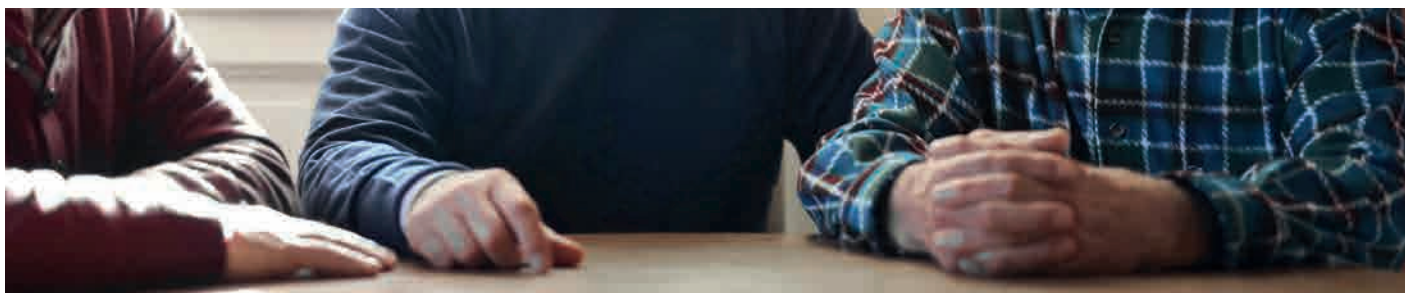
Concerning the elder’s commission or role, the New Testament also reveals that the elder was to serve at the Presbytery level. This is clear from Acts 15 where the record is given of a gathering of apostles and elders, who were called to deal with a serious doctrinal matter – essentially the doctrine of justification. The point is clear that, while the apostles were present, they did not undertake to settle the dispute alone (v6). Rather, elders were present, and the verdict was delivered to all churches on behalf of the apostles and elders (vs 22-24). In other words, the apostles sat and participated in the assembly as elders along with the elders of the various churches. This detail is strong proof that, at this stage in New Testament history, the permanent oversight of Christ’s Church at a Presbyterial level had been already established and was in active operation. Thereby, it is underlined that the elder’s commission

includes representing the local church at the Presbytery level.

With such an important commission or role for the ruling elder, we are not surprised that the Lord placed a very high requirement on character and conduct regarding those who serve in this office. 1 Timothy 3:1-7 is exceedingly strong in its emphasis on personal character, with a wide variety of qualifications laid down by the Spirit of God. The key stipulation is that the bishop or elder ‘must be blameless’ (v2). The word ‘blameless’ signifies ‘that which cannot be laid hold of’ – thus, not open to censure but irreproachable. There is a solemn reason for this irreproachability. At the close of the chapter, Paul writes of the church as being ‘the pillar and ground of the truth.’ For that to happen, surely Christ’s Church must have elders of the proper caliber. Those who are to give spiritual leadership must be men, in terms of character and behaviour, who are true and faithful to their Great King and Head. Such men alone are qualified to rule over the Lord’s flock. ■

✉ **Rev John Greer,**
Ballymena Free Presbyterian Church.

Who Pastors the Pastor?



“I encourage you to pray for our ministers as each brother gives himself to the work of the Gospel.”

It is our conviction that the office of a gospel minister or teaching elder is agreeable to Scripture. A congregation naturally looks to its minister for support and, when a congregation becomes vacant, there is a concerted cry to God at both local and Presbytery levels that the Lord would send a man to fill the pulpit. It is most necessary that there are ministers for the well-being of the Church; that being said, surely the question must be raised: ‘Who pastors the pastors?’

It was for this reason that the Presbytery appointed a Pastoral Care Commission in 2016, consisting of elders and ministers with particular knowledge in this field – from theological, experiential, medical, and business perspectives – to examine the matter. The result was a pastoral care policy, which was reviewed this year. This policy added to good work already done in this area; the annual Ministers’ Week of Prayer, for example, has been – and is – an invaluable source of spiritual refreshment.

The policy recognises the unique burdens placed upon the minister. The hours in the study, the exertions of regular preaching, exposure to deeply tragic and heartbreaking circumstances, dealing with a variety of pastoral matters (many of which are known only to him), and chairing Session and Committee meetings place a strain on body, mind, and spirit. The minister is on call 24/7, except for his announced holiday leave when

he is replaced by an appointed local minister for pastoral emergencies. The constancy of the burden is something with which every pastor lives. I can recall one young minister telling me about the sense of responsibility, which he found overwhelming, immediately following his ordination.

The policy, therefore, puts some measures in place for the welfare of our ministers. All should take a day off each week (Dr Paisley called this: ‘the minister’s sabbath’) and take five weeks’ holiday per year. The word from our Saviour, ‘Come ye apart and rest awhile’, is often quoted within the context of physical rest.

Ministers can be prone to sickness, sometimes more so, on account of the stresses they encounter. Dr Martyn Lloyd Jones referred to the high level of nervous energy required by the ministry, which can exact a heavy toll on both the individual and his family. Therefore, our policy needed to address the issue of sickness within the pastorate. When a minister falls sick, the Presbytery Officers are notified, who then must appoint a relief pastor after four weeks, so that the entire burden of the work can be removed. Significantly, we also have an Occupational Health Physician who ministers can turn to at any time, which is especially helpful during times of prolonged sickness.

The policy also makes provision for

furthering the development of our ministers beyond the Whitefield College years. A seminar will now take place every September where practical issues faced in ministry will be examined. The fellowship of such times cannot be overestimated as the ministry is often a lonely and solitary life, carrying burdens which others do not readily see.

There are a couple of practical outcomes, however, which are worthy of note:

1: Be aware of your minister’s responsibilities, limitations, and frailties. Your encouragement and love make a big difference. When dealing with a tragic death in Clogher Valley, I was deeply moved by how my congregation pastored me through their prayers and encouragement, as I ministered to a devastated family.

2: This policy and the spirit it promotes are for the betterment of our entire church family. In activating the scriptural principle of shepherding and showing care for our ministers, we attempt to do all in our power to keep our brethren healthy and encouraged for the sake of the good work to which they are called.

I encourage you to pray for our ministers as each brother gives himself to the work of the Gospel. ■

✉ **Rev Peter McIntyre**, *Convenor of the Pastoral Care Commission.*



*The Preaching
of the Paisleys &
How God Gave
Times of Revival
to Both a Father
and Son.*

In a very real way, the whole story of the Free Presbyterian Church started in the city of Armagh because it was there that Dr Ian Paisley was born on 6th April 1926. At the time of his birth, his father was the pastor of the Baptist Church in the city.

James Kyle Paisley, who was from Sixmilecross in Co Tyrone, had moved to Armagh during the First World War in 1915. He found employment with Mr Lennox in his shop, which became the very well-known Lennox's Department Store in the city. It was during this time, while working for Mr Lennox, that James Kyle heard the call of God into the work of the ministry, and doors began to open to him to preach the Word. The first opportunity was to speak at a monthly meeting in Grangemore, which is a short distance out of Armagh, just off the Moy Road. These meetings continued for around four years, and they knew much of the blessing of God upon them.

A SCENE OF GREAT BLESSING

In the providence of God, around the same time, the third Armagh Presbyterian Church Hall became available to the young Mr Paisley for the preaching of the Gospel. A weekly meeting, especially for young men, was commenced in this hall, and under Mr Paisley's ministry, there was a move of God, and many of those young men were converted. When looking back upon those days, Mr Paisley stated, 'This hall was the scene of great blessing and stirring among God's people.'

Those meetings in the third Armagh Presbyterian Hall led to the formation of the Baptist Church in the city. In 1917, seven dedicated believers including James K. Paisley felt the need for a distinct fundamentalist witness in the city and they became the foundation members of the new Baptist congregation. This was to be the first of two different congregations

that a preacher from this Paisley family would be instrumental in planting in Armagh city.

The Lord had continued to speak strongly to the young preacher about full-time service. In his own words, he testified, 'The Lord brought me one verse in particular from His Word, Matthew 4:19: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." I submitted my will to His and waited upon the Lord to guide concerning my sphere of ministry.'

The Lord soon opened to him a door of service because the newly formed Baptist Church had no hesitation in extending a call to him to be their pastor. Mr Paisley then spent time studying in preparation for the pastorate at the Irish Baptist College in Dublin, and after graduating, he continued his ministry in Armagh Baptist Church. It was a ministry owned by God; the work grew as many souls were saved, and, at that time, the first Baptist Tabernacle in Armagh was erected on the Mall. The building is still there to this day.

LOVER OF SOULS

James Kyle Paisley had a love for souls and was greatly used in the Armagh area as an evangelist. The first mission that he held was in Keady Orange Hall. Keady is eight miles from Armagh, and every night Mr Paisley rode back and forth to Keady on his bicycle to conduct those meetings. There was a real move of the Spirit of God in that mission, and somewhere in the region of one hundred souls were won to Christ.

Pastor Paisley asked a young man of fourteen years of age, from a family that he knew in the area, to help him with that mission. The young man was given the tasks of opening the Orange Hall, and then lighting the lamps and the fire in the hall in preparation for the meetings. The young man carried out those responsibilities faithfully every night and, as a result, he was found under the powerful preaching of God's Word. Many years later, he testified, 'I sat through that whole mission and was moved, and convicted, and I trembled, but I never got saved!'

In the 1960s, Pastor Paisley's son, Rev Ian Paisley, was being greatly used in evangelism across the province and even much further afield. As a result of his evangelistic labours, the Free Presbyterian Church had been born in the village of Crossgar on Saint Patrick's Day 1951.

In 1962, Mr Sam Watson of Armagh City wrote on behalf of an earnest group of believers to invite Rev Paisley to come to his home city of Armagh to hold a gospel mission. After three years of waiting, planning, and powerful prayer meetings that were held in the building of the Armagh Elim Church, the mission was held in a tent at the end of the summer of 1965. The mission began on Lord's Day 22nd August and continued for six weeks. Such was the attendance at those meetings that the tent had to be extended three times, and up to eight hundred people attended one meeting.

ARMAGH FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The mission was a powerful time of revival in Armagh, and one hundred and seven souls professed faith in Christ as their Saviour. The last meeting of the mission was on the Lord's Day 10th October and, in the tent that Sabbath morning, Rev Paisley as the Moderator of Presbytery constituted the Armagh congregation of the Free Presbyterian Church. The Armagh Church was the twelfth congregation of the Free Presbyterian Church to be formed, but it was the first congregation of the denomination to be founded in County Armagh.

This was the second congregation to be established by a Paisley in Armagh City. It was a unique situation when the evangelistic labours of both father and son were used to found different congregations in the same city; both of

which continue in their witness of the Gospel to this day.

A REMARKABLE TESTIMONY

In January 1975, Dr Paisley conducted another gospel mission in Armagh – this time in the newly opened church building on George's Street. This mission was another time of rich blessing when fifty-five souls were won for Christ.

One night at the end of the meeting, when Dr Paisley made a Gospel appeal, an old man came forward and was saved by God's grace. Afterwards, he was sitting in the pulpit talking to Dr Paisley and he told him the striking story that he had been the young boy of fourteen, who had helped his father with the gospel mission in Keady those many years before, and had

trembled under the preaching, but did not get saved at that time. It was nearly sixty years later, under the preaching of Pastor Paisley's son, that he was finally brought to Christ. This story encourages us to never give up on a lost soul.

The ministry of these two revival preachers over the years has borne much more fruit in County Armagh. Both the congregations that they founded in Armagh City have been mother churches; other congregations have been formed from them and many needy souls have been brought to Christ.

It thrills our souls to consider these 'times of refreshing' in former days. But the Lord assures us that days of revival can be repeated (Psalm 85:6). May that encourage us to our knees to pray for another mighty move of God in our day! ■

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

“
It thrills our souls to consider these 'times of refreshing' in former days. But the Lord assures us that days of revival can be repeated.
”




A New Church Building in

Port Lincoln

At the beginning of July, the congregation in Port Lincoln took the exciting step of moving into a new church building.

 **Below:** The new church building



 **Above:** Rev Kyle Graham preaching in the new building

Since 1980, the church has met together in what was a converted home and is very thankful for the Lord's blessings known there over the years. There has, however, been an increasing awareness of issues which needed to be resolved. The building had gradually deteriorated and needed significant work done. There were also practical problems, such as difficult access to the toilet facilities for any with mobility issues.

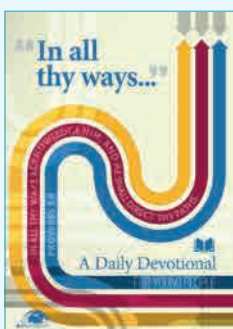
Having had a burden for the need, and bringing the matter to the Lord, the church became aware of the availability of a Church of Christ building and of a buyer for the old building. Through the leading of the Lord and the generosity of God's people in Port Lincoln, the

congregation has been able to purchase the new building outright.

The new property is in a much better and more visible location in the city. It has good toilet facilities with disability access. There is a cry room, a more spacious kitchen, and there is space that can be used either for catering or to extend the worship space. There is also land at the back of the property which can be used in the future as the Lord directs. The church is currently carrying out some minor improvements to fit the new property for its needs. There is reason for great thankfulness over what the Lord has done. ■

 **Rev Kyle Graham,**
Port Lincoln, South Australia.

A New Youth Devotional Book



In *All Thy Ways* is a new daily devotional produced by the FPC Mission Board. While it is aimed especially at young people, it will also be a valuable resource for Christians of all ages. The title was specifically chosen because, each day, different decisions in life are faced and the purpose of the devotional is to direct hearts and minds to the Word of God – to seek a word from Him 'in all thy ways' (Proverbs 3:6).

The devotional has been written by a number of our ministers, and each month a different Bible character is studied with practical application to be

of vital assistance to you in living and working for the Lord.

The book will be available in late 2023 and copies will be available to purchase through local churches. The cost of the book is £7 each, and after printing costs have been covered, proceeds will go to purchase Bibles for use by our home missionaries in their evangelistic work.

For further information, please contact Rev Garth Wilson on 07899 955255. ■

 **Rev Garth Wilson,**
Home Missions Subcommittee Chairman.

MISSIONARY VISION

Missionary Journey to

Nepal

The country of Nepal has the greatest altitude change of any location in the world. The lowlands are at sea level and the Himalayan mountains are the tallest in the world. Jayne and I had the privilege of visiting here in May on behalf of the Mission Board.

The day after we arrived, we visited churches towards the Chinese border. To get here, we travelled about one hour and forty minutes off the nearest tarred road on steep and twisty 'laneway' roads, the journey being completed in first and second gear. The first church we visited has twelve to fifteen people in attendance and it is run by the church elder in whose small house they meet. We had a great time here and brought a word on 'The Unmovable Foundation'. That evening, we spoke at another mountain church as we travelled back to Kathmandu.

On Friday, we visited the LTBS studio and, also, spoke at a church in the Kathmandu Valley. This church has between fifty to sixty people in attendance.

Below: Rev Creane preaching at the Pastors' Conference



Above: Visiting one of the Nepalese churches

Saturday is the day that Nepalese believers have their main meetings. Jayne spoke at the Youth Fellowship at 8.30am from Daniel chapter one, then I spoke at the morning service on 'Grace to help in time of need', after which Jayne spoke at the ladies' meeting on Hannah.

The Sunday meeting itself is shorter and has a much smaller attendance; I spoke on the subject of prayer. Afterwards, we were introduced to a young Nepalese lady who is studying medicine in Bangladesh and whose ambition it is to be a medical missionary doctor to her own people. Please remember the work that our friends in Nepal carry on in the orphanage. We had the opportunity to pass on some gifts for the children and hear of their progress as they grow up in such a supportive family environment.

Monday saw the commencement of ten meetings in the Pastors' Conference and the subject we chose was 'The Ten Plagues'. Approximately one hundred and eighty people attended and the folks there were very appreciative of the word that was brought. The people were hungry for the Word of God, and they sat on the floor throughout in very sticky 30° heat.

After the conference finished on Wednesday morning, there was a graduation service for the fourteen



Above: Mrs Creane speaking at the ladies meeting

young ladies and two young men who had completed their respective Bible College courses. At this service, we brought a missionary challenge on 'The Mission Field on our Doorstep' from John chapter four.

God has opened a great and effectual door for the Gospel in Nepal. We do rejoice in the impact the Gospel has made, and for the many churches and fellowships that have sprung up. We trust that you will continue to pray for and support God's work in Nepal – its Moderator, officers, ministers, and people. Also, pray for our missionary in this land of 'the roof of the world', and that God's name will be exalted among the heathen (Psalm 46:10). ■

Rev Jonathan Creane
Asian Subcommittee Secretary.

MISSIONARY VISION

Update on the Bible Training Institute



In February 2021, the Bible Training Institute, under the auspices of the Mission Board, commenced training with twenty-two students from Kenya, Uganda, Guinea, and the

Philippines. Three more students were added in 2022, two from Pakistan and one from Tanzania.

The subjects covered during the two-year course were Theology, Hermeneutics, Exegesis, Homiletics, Worship, Evangelism, Missionary Work, Book of Church Order, and one elective subject. The aim of the course was to give solid biblical training to young men seeking to serve the Lord in their homelands. A certificate would be awarded on completion of the course. The first students have now completed their course.

Like all new ventures, it was not without its challenges. For some, communication was a barrier. Although all of the students spoke English to varying standards, sometimes they

failed to fully grasp the meaning of what was being said in lectures. Another issue was the lack of access to computer equipment, with some of the students only able to type up assignments on their mobile phones. Several students also had limited access to the Internet, which prevented their receiving the lectures by email.

Pray earnestly for those students who have passed through the Institute, that God would build them up in the faith and help them to reach out with the Gospel in their own lands. Also, remember the Bible Training Institute as plans are being made for another group of students to commence their studies in January 2024. ■

✉ **Mr John Murray,**
Training Institute Administrator.

The Carscaddens Leave for Uganda

A large congregation of nearly 300 people gathered in Dungannon Free Presbyterian Church (kindly granted) on Thursday 8th June for the Carscaddens' Sending Forth Service. Rev Carscadden's brother-in-law, Rev Gordon Dane (Crossgar), committed the meeting to the Lord in prayer. After which Miss Tirzah Walker (Lurgan) brought two very fitting messages in song. Greetings were brought on behalf of the Coragarry congregation by Mr David Moore (Clerk of Session). Presentations were made to Rev Carscadden by Rev James Porter (Consider Christ Committee) and Mr Alastair Hamilton (Mission Board). Rev Carscadden, in response, thanked everyone for their support for them as a family and appealed for continued prayer as they leave to take up their labours in Uganda. Greetings were also read from Miss Noreen McAfee (Uganda).



✉ The Carscaddens with members of the Mission Board

The Scriptures were read by Rev Raymond Robinson (Kesh), the minister of the Carscaddens' home congregation. Rev Colin Mercer (Omagh), Chairman of the Mission Board, preached a missionary challenge from the Sending Forth Service in Acts 21:5&6.

Greetings were brought from Presbytery by the Moderator, Rev John Armstrong (Dungannon). Then, the members of the Mission Board and of Presbytery who were present gathered at the front of the church, and Rev Armstrong led in the prayer of dedication. Mr Jonathan McAuley (Ballymoney), Secretary of

the Ugandan Subcommittee, offered the closing prayer and benediction. After the service, an excellent supper was kindly served by the ladies of the Dungannon Church, and the time of food and fellowship was enjoyed by everyone.

The Carscaddens left for Uganda on Thursday 15th June, and they have settled in well on the Emmanuel Mission Station. They have been encouraged by souls that have been saved and new people coming into the church services. ■

✉ **Rev David McMillan,**
Chairman Ugandan Subcommittee.

Mission Team 2023 Uganda

After months of planning, the Uganda mission team left Dublin on 22nd June. We arrived safely in Entebbe and were greeted by our missionaries in Uganda, Miss Noreen McAfee and Rev Ray Carscadden.

Our first day was spent at the Emmanuel mission station, meeting the children and staff there. On both Lord's Days, the team took part in all the meetings, including the two main services, the Sunday School, and the prison outreach.

Our first week was spent conducting fifteen VBS meetings which included crafts, games, singing, quizzes, memory verses, and learning about the life of Joseph. These were very special times as we all got to spend time with the children and teach them God's Word.

The programme also involved taking part in the weekly prayer meeting



and open air, and these were very blessed times as we saw such a hunger among the local people to listen to the preaching of the Gospel.

The trip concluded with a Youth Conference when David McAuley and I spoke on the life of Jonah. The young people listened very attentively, and it was so encouraging to see them 'drink in' the Word of God.

There are so many highlights of the trip, including the days off and trips to local areas. Perhaps one of the most memorable experiences of the trip was the bond we all made with the children, young people, and the congregation of Emmanuel. The team spent their lunch breaks playing and connecting with the children and showing them the love of Christ.



Yet, most especially, it was a thrill to see young people concerned about their souls and a joy to counsel them for salvation.



It was a joy to be a part of the team and I highly commend the group of young people for their exceptional work throughout the trip and the unity they all showed. May God bless their labours and, in His will, call some of the group to the mission field in a full-time capacity. We also pay tribute to the kindness and hospitality shown to us by Noreen, Ray, Rhonda, John, George, and Isla Grace, who looked after us so well. ■

✓ **Rev Garth Wilson,**
Team Leader.

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Dates For The Diary

SEPTEMBER

3rd - 10th

CROSSGAR, DRIVE-IN MISSION
(Derryboye Road)

Time: Sunday 3.30pm, Mon-Fri 7.30pm
Evangelist: Rev Ryan McKee

10th - 24th

MONEYSLANE, GOSPEL MISSION

Time: Sunday 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Evangelist: Rev Daniel Henderson

10th - 24th

OMAGH, GOSPEL MISSION

Time: Sundays 12 noon & 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Evangelist: Rev Thomas Murray

10th - 24th

MULVIN, GOSPEL MISSION

(‘The Somme Hall’, Newtownstewart)
Time: Sundays 3.30pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Evangelists: Noel Stevenson, Colin Maxwell
Singers and testimonies each night.

18th

DUNGANNON, LADIES’ CONFERENCE

Time: 8.00pm
Speaker: Mrs Vi Dawson
Singers: Miss Charlotte Caughy, Mr Peter Mander
Supper provided. All ladies welcome.

25th - 29th

GOSPEL MISSION

(Ranfurlly House, The Square, Dungannon)
Time: 8.00pm
Various speakers and singers each night.

OCTOBER

7th - 13th

LURGAN, HARVEST GOSPEL MISSION

Time: Sat 7.30pm, Sun 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Evangelist: Rev Thomas Martin

22nd - 27th

GRACE FPC, EVANGELISTIC MEETINGS

Time: Sunday 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Theme: Questions That Matter
Various preachers.

22nd - 29th

BETHEL FPC, HARVEST GOSPEL MISSION

Time: Sundays 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Evangelist: Rev John Morrow

22nd - 3rd Nov

AGHALEE, GOSPEL MISSION

Time: Sundays 6.30pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Evangelists: Mr Noel Shields, Mr Colin Maxwell

27th - 29th

OMAGH, REFORMATION CONFERENCE 2023

Friday: 8.00pm
Saturday: Men’s Breakfast 9.30am;
Reformation Rally 7.30pm
Sunday: 12 noon and 7.00pm
Guest Preacher: Pastor Pooyan Mehrshahi

28th - 3rd Nov

BALLYMENA, BIBLE CONFERENCE 2023

Time: Sat 7.30pm, Sun 11.30am & 6.30pm,
Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Guest Preacher: Dr Stephen Pollock
Subject: Jonah – The Marvellous Mercies of God



ANNALONG FPC

MEN’S DAY CONFERENCE

Date: Saturday 21st October 2023
Subject: The Holiness of God
Preachers: Revs Ryan McKee, Patrick Baker & Julian Patterson.

A two-course lunch will be provided by Top Nosh at £16.50pp. To facilitate catering arrangements, please contact Rev Harris before 14th Oct, if you plan to attend and would like to book your lunch.

Tel. 028 437 68 040 Email. mensconferencefpc@gmail.com

9.30am:
Meet and greet with refreshments

10am-12.15pm:
Opening sessions

12.30pm:
Lunch

1.15pm:
Final session