

# Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

Revive Thy  
Work O Lord  
Co. Tyrone

Reactions  
to the  
Saviour's  
Birth

Who is  
He in  
Yonder  
Stall?

NOV  
2023  
#66  
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*Thank you*

## Editorial

All of us, at some point in our lives, have expressed our thankfulness for 'small mercies'. When we do this, we are trying to find an advantage that comes from an unpleasant situation. Recently, I booked my car with the mechanic, thinking that only a pre-MOT service was required. However, what seemed a routine service turned into a series of essential repairs. There was a silver lining, however. For a long time, I had been unsuccessfully hunting down a battery for the key fob. When I picked up the car and heard the unwelcome news of additional repairs, the mechanic was able to say with some degree of pleasure, 'I got the battery replaced for your key fob!'. This was a small but welcome mercy.

God is a God who shows us mercy each day. His mercies are never small; they are always great and glorious. Jeremiah, amid his lamentation, recalled to mind this very truth, and it gave him hope: 'It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness' (Lamentations 3:21-23). The Christian knows that he or she is not worthy of the least of all God's mercies (Genesis 32:10), while simultaneously confessing, along with David, that they are always 'very great' (2 Samuel 24:14).

Christian, what mercy we have experienced in Christ our Saviour, and what joy we have knowing that His goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our life! ■

✉ **Editor**  
[editor@fpvision.org](mailto:editor@fpvision.org)



“*I urge you to consider the love of Christ in coming into this world, giving Himself upon Calvary's cross, and may your heart be drawn to honour the Lord.*”

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# Are We Burdened?

In the book of Habakkuk, we read of how the Jewish people had departed from Almighty God. They had chosen the path of compromise and worldliness, much to the displeasure of both the Lord and the prophet Habakkuk. Due to their sin, the Lord was going to bring in the seventy-year Babylonian captivity (1:6) and judge the people. The opening verse of Habakkuk's prophecy reads, 'The burden which Habakkuk the Prophet did see'.

When I read these opening words, I often wonder, do we possess the same burden for our nation? Sin and immorality of all shades seem to be the order of the day. In the national realm, we find laws are passed to legalise the most wicked of things – from sodomy to the murder of the unborn. In the sphere of education, our children are being bombarded with the devil's attacks in the most perverse of ways. We live in days when, even in Christendom, apostasy seems to be prevalent, and, even among evangelical Christians, compromise and worldliness seem to be the norm.

With all of this in mind, are we burdened for our nation, are we burdened for the church, and are we even burdened for souls the way we ought to be? In Psalm 126:5 we read, 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy'. However, instead of weeping over the sinful demise of everything good around us, are we even bothered? Habakkuk was bothered in his day, and I submit that we ought to be burdened in our day too.

Habakkuk encouraged himself with the knowledge that God is Sovereign. In chapter 1:12 he writes, 'Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One?' He also encourages himself with the knowledge that better days lie ahead at the return of Christ, when he writes in chapter 2:14, 'For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD...'

However, in between time, his burden leads him to pray for revival. In chapter 3:2 we read, 'O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD,

revive thy work in the midst of the years...' Habakkuk was afraid of the captivity that was to come but prayed for God to still move in the time that the Jews were in slavery. So, did God answer Habakkuk's prayer? I believe He did. In the book of Daniel, we read of numerous instances when godly men stood for Jehovah in a

hostile environment and God blessed their witness. We read of mini revivals in the land of Babylon in Daniel 2:47; 3:28-29; 4:1-3; 4:37; and 6:25-28.

Therefore, in conclusion, let us learn from the lessons of Habakkuk. We ought to hate sin, and we ought to be burdened whenever we see compromise abound. We ought to encourage ourselves that God is still sovereign and remember that better days lie

ahead – Christ is returning! Chiefest of all, God still answers prayer today. ■

“  
*Are we burdened for our nation, are we burdened for the church, and are we even burdened for souls?*  
”

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



# Reactions to the Saviour's Birth

**W**hen considering the responses to the Saviour's birth, it is remarkable to note that the reactions have changed very little down through the generations.

The fullness of the time had come for Christ to be born into this world, but how would He be received? The birth was announced by angels in a great chorus of praise. He who had been promised as early as Genesis (3:14), who had been spoken of by the Patriarchs, and who had been prophesied concerning had now come. Matthew chapter 2 describes for us the various reactions at the time when Christ was born.

## **SOME WERE HOSTILE TO THE SAVIOUR**

This group was spearheaded by Herod. It tells us in Matthew 2:3 that Herod was 'troubled'. This description of Herod revealed a commotion within - an inner turmoil of the heart. Hearing of another king being born and of the Messiah coming into the world, troubled him. There was a sinful, selfish spirit in the heart of Herod. Not only was he troubled, but the verse says 'and all Jerusalem with him'. News that the Saviour had come had awakened dread within the hearts of Herod and others. The question most definitely would have arisen within their hearts, 'What then shall I do with Jesus?'

Such a troubled state of mind led Herod to inquire, and he promptly gathered together the chief priests and the scribes to help him. Herod demanded of them where Christ should be born, and they were able to give him a ready answer that Christ would be born in Bethlehem of Judea.

However, in his conversation with the wise men, Herod's hostility towards Christ became increasingly apparent. This animosity towards Jesus Christ manifested itself through a show of insincerity. In Matthew 2:8, Herod deceitfully expressed a desire to visit and worship Christ, but it was a hostile deception. It was only pretence. The

*“The wise men demonstrate to us what it is to honour the Saviour. They honoured the Lord in their search. They were seeking Him to worship Him because the Saviour was the desire of their heart. We are wise to follow their example to seek the Lord with all of our hearts.”*

real intention of Herod is brought out in Matthew 2:13 when the angel warned Joseph, ‘Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him.’ Hostility towards Christ is also revealed by anger; Matthew 2:16 indicates that Herod was exceeding wrath. A total intolerance towards the Saviour is revealed. Similarly today, many, when confronted with the message of Christ, become exceeding wrath and vent their anger in the direction of God’s people.

We see how further hostility to Christ leads to a breakdown in morality: babies and infants were to be slain. Matthew 2:16 records that Herod

‘sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem... from two years old and under.’ It was a terrible atrocity, and yet it is possible to see this hostility similarly manifesting itself today. The name of Christ is blasphemed, false religion has spread rapidly, and the slaughter of innocent babies takes place on an alarming scale.

#### **SOME WERE HEEDLESS TO THE SAVIOUR**

This group of people was spearheaded by the chief priests and scribes. These men were to be the teachers and guardians of the law of God and had a responsibility to study the law and the Scriptures. Malachi 2:7 tells us, ‘The priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth.’ Accordingly, we read that Herod relied on their expertise in Matthew chapter 2. He asked them where Christ would be born and, without having to look it up, they showed a remarkable knowledge of the Scriptures by quoting the words of the prophet Micah that Christ’s birth would be in Bethlehem of Judea.

With all of their knowledge, one would expect that their hearts would be stirred to seek after the Lord and to go with the wise men; but instead they remained unmoved and unconcerned. Here were a people who knew the Scriptures with a head knowledge but were heedless to that Word. Knowledge and learning had puffed them up with pride. As Paul said in Romans 10:3, ‘... going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.’

Many today would fall into this category in their reaction to the Gospel. They possess a knowledge of the Gospel, but it does not seem to make any impression upon them. They would have the details without the devotion, the head knowledge without the heart knowledge, and the facts without the faith. Their hearts are empty of the grace of God. It is sad to see people who have the truth but remain heedless of what it teaches.

#### **SOME HONOURED THE SAVIOUR**

The wise men demonstrate to us what it is to honour the Saviour. They honoured the Lord in their search. There was a seeking after the Lord. They were assured the Lord was leading them by the star; they believed that the Messiah had been born. They were seeking Him to worship Him because the Saviour was the desire of their heart. We are wise to follow their example to seek the Lord with all of our hearts. As Isaiah writes, ‘Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near’ (55:6).

They also honoured the Lord in their submission. The Bible tells us ‘they fell down and worshipped Him’ (Matthew 2:11). They gave themselves wholly to the Lord. We do well to ask ourselves if we have bowed the knee in submission to Christ?

Further, they honoured with their substance, opening their treasures, and presenting those royal gifts to the King - gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They gave their best to the Lord.

They honoured the Lord in their service. Matthew 2:12 shows their obedience to the Lord. They obeyed God rather than man. Herod wanted them to return to him, but the Lord directed them another way. In all of our service, we should seek to follow the Lord’s direction and honour Him.

In viewing these responses to the Saviour’s birth, we need to ask ourselves to which category we belong? I hope that no one reading this article would show open hostility to the Saviour, but there may be those who are heedless to the Saviour. I urge you to consider the love of Christ in coming into this world, giving Himself upon Calvary’s cross, and may your heart be drawn to honour the Lord, by repenting of your sin and trusting in Him as your personal Saviour. ■

✉ **Rev Ian Kenny,**  
*Hillsborough Free Presbyterian Church.*

📷 Photos: courtesy of Kathryn Kane

# Whitefield College Graduation and Commencement



📷 Above: 2023 Graduates, front row, with continuing students (Absent, Jonathan Eccles and Jonathan Jordan)

The annual Whitefield College of the Bible Graduation & Commencement Service was hosted this year by the Martyrs' Memorial Church. Rev Alan Smylie, College Academic Committee Convenor, conducted the service and welcomed all in attendance. After the opening praise, Rev Ron Johnstone (Lecturer in Missionary Principles) offered prayer, and resident minister Rev Ian Brown (Deputy Moderator and Lecturer in Historical Theology) read the Scriptures.

Rev Smylie called on College Principal Rev Timothy Nelson to bring his report and present Diplomas to this year's

graduates. Mr Nelson referred to the absence of Lecturer Rev Gordon Dane, recovering from injuries sustained as the result of an accident, and student Jonathan Jordan, who with his wife Clare had suffered the tragic loss of their infant son Matthew in recent days. He assured all concerned of the continued support of the College community.

Mr Nelson spoke of another successful year for the College. He thanked all who had supported this vital work prayerfully and practically. Acknowledgement was made of lecturers and students, College Administrator Mrs Linda Bell, and the Academic and Management Committees and their respective

Convenors, Rev Smylie and Mr Norman McIlroy. Mr Nelson also expressed appreciation to the Martyrs' congregation and to Mr Peter Lunn, caretaker, for his continued assistance.

The Principal reported that two new Lecturers would commence during the 2023-24 College year: Rev Garth Wilson (Sandown) would take the Hermeneutics class, and Rev Marcus Lecky (Cookstown) would oversee the Old Testament Hebrew class from January, when current Lecturer Rev John Armstrong would retire from this role. Just one student was beginning studies this year, Esther McKee, who is a member of the Tandragee congregation.

Mr Nelson introduced the graduates: Elizabeth Edwards (Lisburn), Samuel Fitton (Portadown), Glenn Hamilton (Ballymena), David McAuley (Ballymoney), and Deepanker Nandy (India) – the last of whom had joined classes remotely and who had travelled to Northern Ireland for the occasion. Diplomas were presented, and the Lord's guidance and blessing wished for every graduate.


Mr Nelson concluded by urging continued prayerful support for the College, referring to the New Building Project at Tandragee, for which full planning permission had now been granted. He appealed to young people to reflect seriously on whether the Lord might have them study at the Whitefield College.

Rev John Greer (Clerk of Presbytery and Lecturer in Systematic Theology)

 **Below:**

First year student Esther McKee (Tandragee) with the Moderator and College Principal.



 **2023 Graduates:** Samuel Fitton, Glenn Hamilton, Elizabeth Edwards, David McAuley, and Deepanker Nandy with the Moderator and College Principal.

put the prescribed questions to the four men who were to be licensed, and recently elected Moderator, Rev Samuel Murray (Lecturer in Pastoral Theology), oversaw the act of Licensing and offered prayer.

In a heartfelt and pointed message based on the closing verses of Luke 9, Mr Murray urged the graduates to go forward and to permit nothing to prompt them to step aside from the work to which God had called them. He reminded all present, regardless of age or circumstances, that it was their duty to seek and be submitted to the will of God for their lives.

Mr Norman McIlroy (Management Committee Convenor) offered prayer and thanksgiving for the supper arranged by Mr Colin McKee. An offering for College funds came to some £1500. ■

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

# Whitefield College of the Bible

## Entrance Examinations


Entrance Examinations for prospective candidates for the Theological Course at the Whitefield College for the year beginning September 2024 will take place at the Whitefield College on the following dates:

<b>Monday 19 February 19.00</b>	English Grammar
<b>Tuesday 20 February 19.00</b>	English Language & Expression
<b>Wednesday 21 February 19.00</b>	History

Candidates must report by 18.50 and are expected to provide their own writing paper. All candidates should forward the Entrance Examination Fee of £35 (for each subject) before 9 February 2024 to:


*Whitefield College of the Bible, 356 Ravenhill Road, Belfast BT6 8GL*  
**E:** whitefieldcollege@icloud.com (Email for Bank Transfer details)

# Ordination and Installation of Rev David Wilson

 **Below:** Rev David Wilson pictured along with his family.



The Jubilee complex was filled on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September for the Ordination & Installation service of Rev David Wilson to the Christian ministry in Ballyclare Free Presbyterian Church. Presiding at the meeting was Rev David Brown. Mr John Irwin opened the meeting in prayer, Rev Graham Lucas read the scriptures, and the Wilson sisters sang. This was followed by the act of ordination conducted by the Moderator, Rev Samuel Murray and Clerk of Presbytery, Rev John Greer. The charge to the Minister and Congregation was then brought by Rev Murray as Moderator. ■


 **Below:** Members of Presbytery ordain Rev Wilson to the Christian ministry.



# Armagh Welcomes New Elders

Three new ruling Elders were recently ordained and installed in Armagh Free Presbyterian Church. All of these men had previously served as Deacons of the congregation. ■



 **Front R to L:** Mr Adrian Stewart, Mr Fred West and Mr Billy McCrum. **Back R to L:** Rev Andrew Patterson (Markethill), Rev John Greer (Clerk of Presbytery), Rev Graham Middleton (Tullyvallen), Rev John Armstrong (Moderator), Rev David McMillan (Armagh).

# Catechism Success in Lisburn

Pictured are Rev Higginson and Sunday School Superintendent Daniel Hamilton with Jethro Wright who recited the Child's Catechism word perfect. ■



# Rev Morrow Receives MBE

Rev John Morrow with his wife Nora on the occasion of the reception of his MBE, for his service of over 40 years in prison chaplaincy in Northern Ireland in Maze and Maghaberry prisons. ■





# Ploughing Championship Outreach 2023

The 92<sup>nd</sup> Irish National Ploughing Championships took place this year at Ratheniska, Co. Laois, from 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> September. Popularly known as ‘The Ploughing Match’, or simply ‘The Ploughing’, this is rural Ireland’s biggest annual event and a much-anticipated date in the farming calendar. It is also much anticipated by the team that attends the outreach every year. Before the event, a lot of rain had fallen, leaving ground conditions very soft, meaning that leggings and wellies were the fashion worn by most people attending.

Over 1,700 exhibitors attend this showcase event, and this year just under 201,000 people braved the conditions. There among the exhibitors and trade stands, the Free Presbyterian Church has a presence. It is now twenty-five years since Mr Colin Maxwell first went to the Ploughing to do outreach; and, from small beginnings, the outreach has progressed to what it is today, in that ten men attend annually, and a marquee is hired for the event.



Once again, this year, the outreach proved to be a wonderful blessing. Though attendance numbers were down overall due to the wet and challenging conditions, people came into the tent as in other years for a welcome rest, free tea, coffee, tray bakes, and biscuits.

There was a great demand for Bibles this year - indeed never before had 156 Bibles been taken from the book table in a single day. All in all, 322 Bibles and 202 New Testaments were taken over the three days of the outreach. Lots of other Gospel literature including booklets, tracts and children’s literature were taken from the table. As always, the postcard prints with farming scenes and a Gospel text proved to be popular among many.

Inside the marquee, as people sat and took their refreshments, members of the team would sit at the table with them and bring the conversation around to the Gospel. By this means, many souls were spoken to of their need for salvation. These conversations are thought-provoking for those who listen,

and we trust that the incorruptible seed sown in the heart will bring forth an abundant harvest.

In the aisle outside the marquee, team members gave out the Gospel farming calendars. This year all 18,000 of these calendars that we had for the outreach were handed out. They were presented to the people in a clear plastic bag, along with a tract written for the occasion - No farmers, No food, No future.

God richly blessed this year’s outreach, and we give God the glory in that a lady from Co. Offaly sought the Lord for salvation on the Tuesday. On Thursday, an opportunity presented itself to hand over a Gospel package to the former Irish Taoiseach Micheal Martin. We praise God for another year of Gospel witness at the Ploughing and for the liberty we have to present Christ on Irish soil. Do continue to pray much that God will bring to Himself a glorious name in the salvation of precious Irish souls. ■

✉ **Rev Jonathan Creane,**  
*Convoy Free Presbyterian Church.*



'Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.'

Psalm 17:5

## The World's Steepest Road

There are two roads, at opposite ends of the earth, that claim to be the steepest in the world. After much measuring, Ffordd Pen Llech in the historic town of Harlech in northwest Wales, with a gradient of 37.5% was deemed to be slightly steeper than that of Baldwin St. in Dunedin, New Zealand, at only 35%.

In the Bible, there is a story about a tremendously steep road between Jerusalem and Jericho. Although these two cities are only seventeen miles apart, there is a steep descent of over half a mile between the two places. So, in Luke 10:30, when the Saviour spoke of a certain man that 'went down' from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, he meant it. However, boys and girls, this was not just a downward

journey geographically, it was also a downward journey spiritually. You see, Jerusalem was a place highly favoured and blessed by God. It was the centre of worship, the place where God's holy Temple was situated. As this man purposely walked away from the city, he would have caught his last glimpse of the Temple as he circled gently down around the Mount of Olives. Very soon the road became steeper and steeper as he walked further and further away from God. This man was going down to Jericho. Jericho was not a place of blessing; in fact, God had once destroyed it. This man was headed to a city which had the curse of God upon it. This steep road would have passed by Bethany, a place the Lord often frequented. Ah! If only he had stopped there, he might have found the Saviour, but on

he went! Only for the mercy of God in sending the Good Samaritan to rescue him, he would have lost everything.

I wonder if you are on the same spiritual downward journey. Perhaps, with some sense of adventure, you can't wait to get away from the godly influence of home. As was the case in the story, such a descent will bring you face to face with many dangers, and if you are not rescued, eternal destruction will be your end. Just as the Good Samaritan, spoken of in the story, had compassion upon our foolish traveller when he was attacked and robbed, the Saviour too is willing to show you compassion, save you and set you back on the right road - homeward and heavenward. ■

### QUIZ

FIND ALL THESE BIBLE PLACES IN THE WORD SEARCH.

The letters that remain spell out a well known river.

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)

- 🔍 BETHLEHEM
- 🔍 JERUSALEM
- 🔍 TYRE
- 🔍 BEERSHEBA
- 🔍 SIDON
- 🔍 GATH
- 🔍 HEBRON
- 🔍 JOPPA
- 🔍 DAMASCUS
- 🔍 JERICHO
- 🔍 BETHEL
- 🔍 ANTIOCH
- 🔍 DERBE
- 🔍 ATHENS
- 🔍 HARAN
- 🔍 EPHESUS
- 🔍 UR

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

# UNDERSTANDING FAMILY WORSHIP:

## ITS HISTORY, THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE

BY TERRY L. JOHNSON

A book that has recently been a great blessing to my whole family is a short read entitled *Understanding Family Worship: Its History, Theology and Practice* by Terry L. Johnson.

Family worship is a subject that is vital for the spiritual health of Christian families. Having been raised in an unconverted household where there was no family worship of any description, this book has benefitted me greatly, and I would highly recommend it to all especially as there is a great obligation on us who profess faith in Christ to guard the home.

The first chapter is The Setting of Family Worship: The Godly Home. If family worship is to be beneficial, it must be conducted in the context of parental devotion to Christ.

J. C. Ryle warns us, 'Do not forget that children learn more by the eye than they do by the ear. No school will make such deep marks on character as the home. Imitation is a far stronger principle than memory'.

The second chapter makes the case for family worship. The Bible makes the case very clear. Consider Deuteronomy 6:6-7: 'And these words, which I commanded thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And

thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.' The Scriptures are to be at the centre of our homes, dominating family life.

The next chapter looks at Elements of Family Worship. The book lists many essential elements of family worship, but one of the most important is prayer. Matthew Henry identifies five themes for family prayers: dependence upon God, confession of sin, thanksgiving for blessings, petitions for mercy and grace, and intercessions for others.

Chapter 4 deals with the Practice of Family Worship. In practising family worship, we do not want to be merely ticking a box or offering lip service to God. Therefore, we ought to be found approaching those special seasons with a proper motive, attitude and aim. The older champions of family worship urge twice daily, which was their custom. Richard Baxter makes the point that 'Morning and evening sacrifices were offered to the Lord; and there is at least equal reason that gospel worship should be as frequent... in gospel times of greater light and holiness, we should not come behind them in times of the law.'

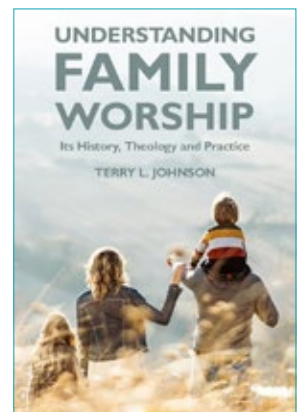
Chapter 5 deals with the Barriers to Family Worship. Many barriers to family worship need to be removed

to maintain or establish that which is essential in the home. Truly a zealous Christian does not need to be persuaded to feast his soul in God and to delight himself in the frequent exercises of faith and love.

In the next chapter, Catechizing is the subject. Do not think that small children are too young to learn the shorter catechism. I encourage you to not restrict them to the child's catechism. C.H. Spurgeon commented, 'Begin early to teach, for children begin early to sin.' The advantage comes later; when they come to years of understanding, that part of their work is done, and they have nothing to do but to study the meaning and use of those words which they have learned already.

The final chapter looks at Parental Hopes. Faithful Christian parents can be confident that their children will come to faith in Christ. Consistent church attendance and family worship will bear fruit in the lives of children reared in such homes. The promises of God will be fulfilled, though according to God's timetable and not ours. ■

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



# WHO IS HE IN YONDER STALL?



**B**enjamin Hanby wrote the words of the popular Christmas carol ‘Who is He in Yonder Stall?’ The first line of each verse asks the question, Who is He? By so doing, we are called to consider the One whom we are singing about and who is the focus of this season and indeed every season of the year.

The hymn is well written as it makes us stop and ask – who is He? The One who came into this world, whose birth in Bethlehem was humble, whose life was modest, but whose death and resurrection were transforming - who is He?

## HE IS OUR MAKER

As the shepherds came to see Jesus that night, they were looking upon their Creator. They were gazing upon the One who created all things.

The little one in the manger had a unique birth, but He had a unique beauty because He is the One who created all things. Looking into the face of that child, they were looking into the face of deity. They were looking at the lips of one who stood at the beginning of time and spoke this world into its existence.

At this time of the year, we celebrate and remember the time when the eternal Creator entered His creation, when the One who stretched forth the heavens was laid beneath the heavens in a manger. The One who spread out the earth upon the waters came into this earth that He created.

Let us think more about this. First of all, let us think about His Deity. In John 1:1 we read, ‘In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.’ Who is the word?

John, in this passage, introduces Christ, as the Word of God – the Logos. He states that Christ is the Word of God but also that He is God.

The deity of the divine Word became the incarnate Word. This truth must never be overlooked.

Secondly, we will consider His Eternality. The babe who lay in the manger was not another created person. As the eternal Son of God, Christ was not created. He is the Creator, because He is as God is, eternal. He has no beginning, and He has no end. He did not start His existence in Bethlehem in the

manger. In John 1:1 we read, 'In the beginning was the word' – and in its original form, it means 'from before the beginning'. John teaches us that the child in the manger had an existence before the world began. He has always existed. He took upon Himself human flesh at a point in time, but before that point in time, He was. There was never a time when the Son of God did not exist.

Thirdly, let us think about His Humility. Paul wrote in Philippians 2:7 that He 'made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men'. The King of Glory lay helpless in a manger, the Creator became dependent upon His creation, and He depended upon Mary and Joseph for His care and His well-being. What humility this is!

He was humble in His birth – there was no room for Him. The One who had the adoring wonder of the angels of Heaven had nowhere to lay His head on earth.

He was humble in His life – He was rejected, despised, mocked and ridiculed.

He was humble in His death – He experienced shame and pain as the Lord of Heaven died the death of a criminal and a convict.

John MacArthur, in one of his books, put it like this: 'Those soft little hands, fashioned by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb, were made so that nails might be driven through them. Those baby feet, pink and unable to walk, would one day walk up a dusty hill to be nailed to a cross. . . . Jesus was born to die'.

### HE IS OUR MONARCH

The wise men knew that a new king was born because of the star that they saw. Yet this was no ordinary star; this was a new star, a signal to these men that a king was born. This solar wonder was a special revelation of God, perhaps only known by these men because Herod knew nothing about this star – he enquired as to

what time the star appeared. The little child in the manger was the King of Glory.

### The Extent of His Kingship

A king was born in Bethlehem, but He was always King. Micah 5:2 reads, 'But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.' The extent of Christ's kingdom has been from everlasting to everlasting. He is King of Heaven and King of all the earth. He was King before He was born, He was King in the manger at His birth, and He was King after His birth. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

### The Expanse of His Kingdom

The kingdom of Christ extends to all places and covers all mankind, as we read in Psalm 103:19: '... his kingdom ruleth over all.' There is not a part of this world that His kingdom does not reach.

### HE IS OUR MESSIAH

Doctor Luke tells us in his Gospel how the angels proclaimed that the Messiah was born. In Luke 2:11, 'For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.' Christ is the promised Messiah. The Jews looked for the Messiah, and they still look for Him. They denied that Christ is the One who was promised from all time, the one whom the prophets spoke about. They look for a Saviour, but they reject the Saviour of the world.

When the shepherds went to see the new-born king, they saw the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, the One who came to save from sin, the One who brought hope, and the One who

dispelled fear. The word Messiah itself means 'anointed One', and the equivalent English word is 'Christ' because Christ is the anointed One. He is the One who was anointed and appointed by the Triune Godhead in the eternal counsels to be our Saviour, to be our Redeemer, and to be our Messiah.

The shepherds were told that the Messiah had come; the Saviour had been born. And so they went to view Him in the manger. In Luke 2:16 we read, '... they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger'. They found the Messiah and the Saviour. Then, having found the Messiah, they then published the news, 'they made known

abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child' (Luke 2:17).

What an opportunity is given to us all at this time of the year to publish the news about Christ and to tell others of His coming into this world. The shepherds found the Saviour, and they wanted others to find Him too. The greatest need of their lives was found in Christ; indeed, the best news they could ever hear was that Christ, the Saviour, had come. Before they heard the news, their hearts were filled with fear, but now their hearts were filled with peace because they had found Christ.

Many at this Christmas time are filled with fear and dread. May they too get to the manger and see the One who is there.

Who is He in Yonder Stall? He is our Maker, our Monarch, our Messiah. ■

✉ Rev Garth Wilson,  
Sandown Free Presbyterian Church.



# SUMMER CAMP

A perfect summer does not exist without a trip to the Youth Council Camp at Greenhill YMCA in Newcastle, Co. Down. This year, 120 young people attended and for those of you who have never had the privilege of attending this camp, it truly is an experience that will never be forgotten!

Each day begins with prayer because ‘a day hemmed with prayer never unravels.’ At breakfast, there is always some voluntary singing and while it may not always be tuneful it is still a blessing to hear God’s children praising His name.



After breakfast, the campers split into groups to do a range of different activities. This is the perfect time to meet new people and make new friends as the big, possibly daunting group, is made smaller. The activities for each team are then announced which include: Stand-up Paddleboarding, Camp Olympics, Laser Tag, Canoeing, Bouldering, a Mountain Walk and many more. Further activities follow lunch and dinner!

The evening meeting begins with hymns and a testimony from one of the leaders before being finished with Rev Paul Foster bringing God’s Word. This year we learned about Cain – a character in the Bible not often talked about – reminding us about the gravity of the sin of pride. We were reminded about the danger of falling into this sin and how it can drag you further than you want to go. We were urged to listen to God’s pleas and taught about Cain’s choice, Cain’s curse and how we often can end up being like Cain when believing we are right while God is wrong.

Then comes supper and some downtime, partaking in activities like Dobble, Monopoly and various icebreakers organised by the leaders. The night is finished with some late-



night/early-morning devotions led by the dorm leaders. In our dorm, we read some devotions taken from Spurgeon. I found that even though they were hard to fully understand, our leaders perfectly explained the meaning. Finally, we ended the day, like we started, with a small prayer meeting within our dorms. Hearing the rest of the people (the same age as me) praying, truly was a blessing.

Overall, the camp was such an encouragement and blessing to my heart. Meeting with similarly aged and like-minded people makes for a fun-packed, faith-filled week! On behalf of all the campers, I would like to thank all the leaders and those of you who remembered the week in prayer and assure you that God truly did bless this year. ■

✉ **Robbie McIlwrath**

## YOUTH COUNCIL DATES

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

### 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CHOIR PRACTICE:

13<sup>th</sup> November, 7:30pm  
Magherafelt FPC

### DELEGATES' MEETING

27<sup>th</sup> November, 8:00pm  
Rasharkin FPC

### BELFAST CHRISTMAS MARKET OUTREACH

9<sup>th</sup> December, 3:00-6:00pm.

### SUMMER CAMP

5<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Full details online. Application forms received on a first come, first served basis.

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCYOUTH.ORG

# LONDON OUTREACH



London — a place of history, commerce, and architecture, but a city that forms a vast mission field. Eager to see this work firsthand, twelve young people from Northern Ireland and Wales, led by Rev Lorimer, travelled to the church of South Grove in northeastern London to experience and participate in the work there. The trip lasted just over a week and was a blessing to all involved.

Immediately upon arrival, the work commenced, headed by Rev Knowles. The mornings began with a Holiday Bible Club, which ran each weekday. Each young person participated, and steady attendance was maintained by the children throughout the week.

The afternoons found the team doing the doors in the area surrounding the church. Many conversations sprang up, particularly with Muslim locals. A

great relationship was also established with a nearby takeaway, which was well-supported during the week! Even there, the opportunity to witness was not wasted, which was further cause for prayer as the two-night mission approached. Those meetings, along with the regular church services, were each a blessing, and the Lord was glorified in each aspect of the work.

An unexpected avenue for ministry presented itself in the form of public transport. Whether on a bus or train, underground or overground, witness was made in the form of singing, testifying, reciting verses, and general conversation. In addition to the public transport, there were also stops made at major sightseeing locations to openly sing the Gospel. Many stopped to listen and record the singing, and who can tell how many seeds of truth were planted through that witness?

The journey home took an unexpected turn, due to the flights being cancelled. However, the Lord had all in His control, and a bus was sent across the water via Scotland with two very willing people at the helm to bring the team safely home. Even with the pressure of unexpected delays, spirits were high, and witness was still being made, even on the last train, confirming to all that the Lord had His plan in this.

The team returned with a new vision for the mainland, particularly London. Being so warmly welcomed by the Knowles family and seeing the work through their eyes left lasting impressions. The mainland workers face many difficulties, but the Lord has also granted them many opportunities. May they be used for His glory! ■

✍ **Rachelle Stripp**

# MULVIN OUTREACH



There is no greater privilege than serving the Lord and sharing the Gospel. This is how eight young people felt as they headed to Mulvin for a week in August 2023. Upon arrival, Rev Abraham was holding his Bible and map with a bright smile! We knew immediately we were in for a busy, yet amazing week.

After a time of prayer and reading the Scriptures, we set out for the doors in the local community. We distributed tracts and invitations to a Gospel

Mission that the church was holding with Noel Shields and Colin Maxwell in Newtownstewart. This local town contains a ruined castle, so the tract conveyed the Gospel through the message of 'ruined castles, ruined lives'. Approximately 4000 tracts were handed out throughout the week.

Together with outreach around the local towns and country roads, we visited various nursing homes. We held a service in each home where some of us testified and Rev Abraham brought the Word. We sang for the residents, accompanied by a guitar and two accordions. This was enjoyed by them, and some residents even joined in on some familiar hymns.

A highlight of the week was visiting a man who was bound to a wheelchair. We sat on his garden wall and sang choruses with him. (Some donkeys even joined in!) Despite his trials, nothing could hide the joy he had in the Lord, which made an impression.

Friday was a more relaxed day with the guys kindly finishing a few doors while the girls headed out shopping with Mrs Abraham. The church held an outing that afternoon where we went bowling with families connected to the church. After a competitive game or two, we headed back to the church where a barbecue and ice cream van were waiting for us. After the good food, we held a Children's Meeting. For the Bible lesson, each child picked a toy animal and Rev Abraham relayed a Bible story using the animal.

The week of outreach was filled with great fun and fellowship (not forgetting coffee)! The church family sacrificed much, providing us with homes to sleep in, unlimited food, and taxiing us around (the latter of which may have resulted in the loss of tyres!). Overall, there was much rejoicing with God's people. The Lord's presence was felt, and it was a privilege to have a small part in His work! ■

✍ **Bethany Stripp**



The Free Presbyterian Church Education Board

# Regional Rallies

## Highlight RSE Issues

**T**he Secretary of State is updating the existing requirements for the Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) curriculum for Key Stages 3 & 4, stating, he had ‘a statutory duty under the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2019 to implement recommendation 86(d) of the Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women’ (CEDAW).

Paragraph 86, section (d) of this report calls upon ‘the State to ... make age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights a compulsory component of curriculum for adolescents, covering prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion, and monitor its implementation.’

The Department of Education is presently consulting ‘on its legal duty to provide for parents/carers to have their child excused from specific areas of the Personal Development strand of Learning for Life and Work at Key Stages 3 and 4.’ The consultation document also makes it clear that any new statutory right to have a child excused ‘does not apply to other areas of Relationships and Sexuality Education whether taught as part of Learning for Life and Work or as part of other subjects, including Religious Education, Biology, History, Drama and English.’

The Education Board of Presbytery has been holding a number of regional

meetings, near to the existing Christian schools, highlighting the following issues about RSE in general:

» **These additional regulations only apply to Key Stages 3 & 4. However, a curriculum for the teaching of RSE in primary and post-primary schools has been in existence for a number of years.** CCEA [The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment, Northern Ireland] states the following: ‘Since the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum was introduced in 2007, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) has been a statutory component of the following key areas of learning: Personal Development and Mutual Understanding in the primary curriculum.

» **Personal Development strand of the learning for life and work ... at post-primary level.’** Parents ought to be aware that RSE is a statutory component of the school curriculum for both primary and post-primary classes and that there exists prescribed minimum content for both. It is acknowledged by CCEA that this prescribed minimum content is taught in other ‘*areas of learning within the school curriculum.*’

This existing RSE curriculum for both primary and post-primary schools is full of objectionable material. For example, the existing primary curriculum says this about Transgenderism: ‘Recent research reveals that transgender

young people become self-aware that their assigned birth sex is different from their gender identity between the ages of 3–5 years old.’

» **There is no legal right for parents to withdraw children from sex education classes in Northern Ireland.** CCEA confirms this by stating, ‘Please note that, in Northern Ireland, there is no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from sex education; however, schools can grant these requests on an individual basis.’ A parent presently wishing to withdraw his or her child is at the mercy of the school, especially the good will of a Principal. The Department of Education acknowledges that it is ‘aware, anecdotally, that in a small number of cases parents have requested that their child be withdrawn from other RSE lessons.’

» **The Secretary of State only has the power to make these changes in grant-aided schools.** While our Christian Schools follow the national curriculum, as far as it is compatible with the Word of God, the Secretary of State does not have power to enforce these changes on us. We have taught the moral law of God and will not be teaching that anyone has a right to access abortion or forms of contraception that involve abortion. ■

✉ **Rev Brian McClung, Convenor.**





A Word to Women

# Sarah

## A Seemingly Perfect, Yet Problematic Life

Sarah was the girl who from the outside looked to have it all. She had ‘stand out’ beauty. Even at the age of sixty-five, Abraham said she was ‘a fair woman to look upon’ (Genesis 12:11). The Egyptians, as soon as they saw her, were awed by her beauty and proclaimed that ‘she was very fair’ (Genesis 12:14). If there had been Instagram in her time, she would have no need

“  
*Life would have been very comfortable; however, her wealth and beauty were not enough to satisfy her.*  
”

for filters! She also had the wealth and prestige of being married to the very wealthy Abraham who was ‘very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold’ (Genesis 13:2) and had servants to attend to her every need. Life would have been very comfortable; however, her wealth and beauty were not enough to satisfy her. Deep down she was very unhappy. The reason for this emptiness was that she desperately wanted a baby, and none had arrived even after years of marriage.

How often in life we look at other people’s lives and imagine how perfect their lives must be compared to our own, but, in reality, behind every door there are heartaches and troubles. We should never be envious of others, as they could have problems we know nothing about.

Being childless was not Sarah’s biggest problem though: not trusting God to deliver on His promise was a greater issue. God had promised Abraham that He would make of him a great nation and that unto his seed He would give the Promised Land (Genesis 12:7). I am sure that Abraham shared this promise with Sarah, but she, like so many, was impatient, and decided to solve the problem herself. Not only did she dream

up the terrible scheme of offering her handmaid, Hagar, to bear a child, but she influenced her husband to doubt the promise of God.

This should make us stop and reflect on what kind of influence we have on our husbands and those around us. Is our advice and influence wise or unwise? Are we a help or a hindrance? Too often in life when we don’t get answers to prayers immediately, we try to think up our own solutions, but we are told repeatedly in the Scriptures to wait and be still. ‘Wait on the Lord: be of good courage,

and he will strengthen thine heart: wait I say on the Lord’ (Psalm 27:14). God always delivers on His promises, and He does not need our help or interference.

Despite the mess that Sarah made, God kept His promise, and Sarah at the grand old age of 90 gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. Can you imagine the joy and excitement after waiting so long for the answer to prayer, to finally see the answer before your eyes and to count his tiny fingers and toes? Abraham threw a big feast to celebrate the birth. They certainly had plenty of energy – more than most 90 and 100-year-olds! What a joyful household it turned into after all

the years of heartache and problems.

“  
*God is faithful and never needs us to manufacture an answer to prayer, even when our patience is running thin.*  
”

As with all Bible stories, we can learn from the mistakes of others so that we do not fall into the same traps that they did. God is faithful and never needs us to manufacture an answer to prayer, even when our patience is running thin.

‘Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised’ (Hebrews 10:23). ■

✉ **Cherith Lecky**  
is married to Rev Marcus Lecky,  
Cooktown Free Presbyterian Church.



Dr. I. R. K. Paisley, in his studies in the book of Judges, *Divine Intervention* in the days of Declension, states, 'Man is totally, absolutely and altogether ruined by sin. He is fallen in his heart, fallen in his conscience, fallen in his mind, fallen in his will. He is totally, completely and absolutely fallen.' If that is the case, and it is, then nothing but a supernatural work of God the Holy Ghost can remedy the situation. Revival is the supernatural work of the Holy Ghost repeated in the heart of so many individuals, that the whole moral climate of an area or nation is transformed.

The preface to *Revival Sermons* by William Chalmers Burns contains a wonderful first-hand account of the effects of the work of the Lord's grace in revival in Scotland during the years 1839-1841:

'The God of love has visited us, and poured out his life-giving Spirit upon the dead souls of men. In some places you might see the solemn sight of hundreds weeping for their sins, and seeking to give up their hearts to Jesus. And, ah what a sweet change has taken place on many. The high looks of the proud have been brought down; dead formalists have become living Christians; worshippers of mammon have been changed into lovers of God; the blasphemous tongues of the profane have been made to sing God's praise; drunkards have cast from them the cup of devils, and have taken the

cup of salvation; unclean persons, who used to be the slaves of lust, the drudges of the devil, the very dregs of humankind, are now sitting at the feet of Jesus; and some, who were ringleaders in every form of sin, are now bold and open, and unflinching in the service of Christ, even as once they were shameless, brazen-faced, and steel-hearted in the service of the Wicked One. Many, who formerly were dead in sin, are now living in the grace of Jesus, in the love of God, in the communion of the Spirit, and in the hope of heaven!'

## PLANTATION OF ULSTER

Like many other parts of our land, County Tyrone has also known such times of blessing. Already in this series, mention has been made of the Plantation of Ulster in 1609. That event marked one of the most important eras in the history of Ulster. As Thomas Hamilton in his *History of Presbyterianism in Ireland* says, '[T]he plantation altered the whole history' of Northern Ireland.

Many of those who arrived came from Scotland and brought with them their Protestant religion and Presbyterian beliefs. They had already established the right to worship the Lord, as outlined in the Word of God, after a long struggle with Romanism in their land. Therefore, they were aware of the potential dangers of coming to Ulster, and of the fact that their arrival was viewed by some as a Protestant infiltration into fiercely Roman Catholic Ireland.

One relevant individual whose ministry was greatly used by the Lord at that time was John Moulder. He was accepted as a minister in Donaghmore parish, in the Dungannon area, on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1625. James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland at the time, received Moulder and others within the established church, even though they were Presbyterian in outlook. The ministries of these men were blessed by the Lord and many hundreds converted to Christ. However, those were dangerous times for God's people. 1641 witnessed the Irish Rebellion, with Sir Phelim O'Neill, one of its leaders, issuing 'The Proclamation of Dungannon' in which he stated that Irish Catholics were rising up in defence of their faith. Protestant plantation settlers as well as native Irish Protestants were attacked. The dwellings of Protestant ministers and local landowners went up in flames. Many paid with their lives. Rev Moulder was martyred for the faith 'once delivered to the saints'. Other faithful ministers in County Tyrone endured a similar fate. Revival in County Tyrone in those days met with fierce opposition. Satan, the great hater of revival, did all in his power to stop it in its tracks.

## 1859 REVIVAL

However, the limitation of the Devil's power was again demonstrated around two hundred years later when the revival fire visited Tyrone in 1859.

Before that, the churches in Omagh had been desiring such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit for at least two years. On hearing of the great American revival in 1857, Dr Paisley, in his *Fifty Nine Revival* book, states that the Presbyterian Presbytery of Omagh had, in the Autumn of 1858, dispatched ministers 'by two and two' to each congregation to address them on the subject of revival. It was in July of '59 that the greatest move of the Holy Spirit in the town was most evidently seen.

The town of Strabane in the west of the county was not unaffected. Evening open-air meetings were common. Each Tuesday, the market day, the Gospel was further preached in the open air from twelve to one o'clock. This was mainly attended by farmers and visitors to the town from the country who, it was reported, 'gladly snatched an hour from the busy day to devote to eternal interests'. At almost every meeting people were heard to cry out for salvation.

Castledearg also saw a great awakening. In his publication *The Year of Grace*, William Gibson speaks of 'commercial travellers' being the agents through which the revival first came to the town. Their business brought them into the area, and they brought with them stories of how the Lord was working in other parts of the country. Those testimonies played no small part in drawing others to Christ. As in other places, general attendance on the Lord's day greatly increased. Many district prayer meetings were established. General crime decreased significantly.

One of the ministers in Cookstown, Rev J. P. Wilson, stated at the time, 'If we take a district four miles round Cookstown, hundreds have been added to the communion of the church... [P]eople come out to the house of God in greater numbers, and listen with more marked attention... [N]eighbourhoods have totally changed in character.' Parallel observations which, at the time, were made concerning the change in spiritual life in Castlecaulfield, Dromore, Gortin, Eglis, and Minterburn give a flavour of the impact the revival had right across the county.

Has the Lord similarly visited County Tyrone since? Many would say, 'No'. However, it is true to say that in the recent past, in the commencement and early years of the Free Presbyterian Church, the Lord under the ministry of Dr Paisley and others greatly blessed this county. Many individuals were converted to Christ. Other believers separated from apostasy. The formation and growth of our congregations in Aghnacloy, Castledearg, Clogher Valley, Cookstown, Dungannon, Kilskeery, Mulvin, Omagh, and Sixmilecross bear testimony to the continued power and grace of God.

However, County Tyrone, like other parts of the country, needs the Lord to come in revival power again. Revival is given in answer to prayer. 'Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?' was the Psalmist's petition. May God's people continue to pray to that end. ■

✉ **Rev John Armstrong,**  
*Dungannon Free Presbyterian Church.*

“  
*Revival is the supernatural work of the Holy Ghost repeated in the heart of so many individuals, that the whole moral climate of an area or nation is transformed.*  
”



# Two Very Encouraging Summer Camps

Children’s Camp has proved to be such a blessing to the children who have attended over the years. Friendships have been made during the camps, children have been saved, and Christians encouraged as they are taught the great truths of the Bible. I want to thank Mr Kyle Wenlock and Rev Timothy Ormerod for leading the camps this year. If you have children who will be aged between 8-12 next summer, consider sending them along to one of the camps as you read the following reports by our camp leaders.

✉ **Rev Ryan McKee, Camp Director.**

## First Camp



The first of two United Children’s Camps was held in the Moyallon Centre, Portadown, from Monday 24<sup>th</sup> to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July. We had forty-eight children in attendance and nine leaders who were responsible for the daily running of the camp, which included all meetings, activities, and outings. During the week the children were taught memory verses from Joshua 1:9, 1 Peter 3:18, and Matthew 6:33. Lessons were also taught on the life of Joshua and, during the missionary meetings, the life of Dr Bill Woods. Each day the leaders had devotions with the children. This was a very encouraging time with all leaders testifying of having been blessed to hear boys and girls pray, some for the first time. The camp concluded on Friday morning with the final Bible meeting at which we were joined by the parents of the campers. ■

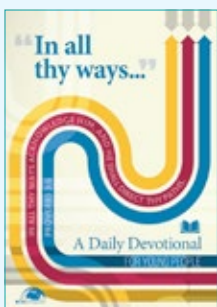
✉ **Mr Kyle Wenlock, Camp Leader.**

## Second Camp



Monday 31<sup>st</sup> July commenced the second week of Children’s Camp with forty-eight children along with eight leaders, including all three of the Mission Board’s Child Evangelists, gathered at Moyallen Centre for a week of activities, fun, late nights, and, most importantly, learning more about the love of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. During the week, each morning and evening included dorm devotions, five-minute practical talks on the importance of reading the Bible and prayer, along with Bible teaching meetings, and missionary meetings. We praise the Lord for His presence with us and help given every day. We are so thankful for safety as the children took part in various activities both on and off-site, including Airtastic Trampoline Park, Banbridge Swimming Pool, and Camp Olympics, to name but a few. One memorable night was the visit of Linfield and Northern Ireland footballer Keri Halliday (Ballymoney FPC) who came and coached the children before bringing a personal word of testimony. ■

✉ **Rev Timothy Ormerod, Camp Leader.**



## In All Thy Ways

**A NEW YOUTH DEVOTIONAL BOOK**

Price: £7. Available through your local church.

Proceeds to help purchase Bibles for home missionary work

For further information: Rev Garth Wilson (07899 955255)



# Kenyan

## Mission Team 2023

I heard it said recently by a person who returned home after a Mission Trip to Africa, ‘You can leave Africa, but Africa never leaves you.’ This statement summarises the impact felt by the sixteen people who attended the Mission Trip to Kenya in August 2023: a trip kindly organised by the Mission Board and Youth Council.

The aim of the trip was three-fold: encourage the Glory Bible Church congregations in Kenya; see the work of God in Kenya; and get a taste of the mission field. I am pleased to say the Lord graciously fulfilled all three. Not only did the team get to see the great

work God is doing in five congregations belonging to Glory Bible Church, but we also got to meet, bond with, and work with the people of God in those congregations. While we were only in Kenya for fourteen days, God enabled the team to participate in ten Holiday Bible Club meetings, six Lord’s Day services, five Sunday Schools, five Prayer Meetings, and two Youth Conferences.

Much could be said about this trip, but let me mention two lasting impressions: God has not only raised six good-sized congregations in Kenya, ranging from 45-85 persons attending a Lord’s Day service, but He has made them stable



and steady with godly men who can humbly lead them and preach ably to them.

God has providentially equipped each congregation with lay persons who have a zeal and ability to reach out to children in their local area, many of whom are trained schoolteachers. A glimpse of this zeal is seen by the great number of children brought into the Holiday Bible Clubs.

In summary, God has opened a great door in Kenya for the preaching of the Gospel. The Mission Team and I are burdened more than ever to pray for it. Will you pray with us? ■

✉ **Rev Paul Foster**, *Team Leader.*



## Book Appeal


**CHRISTIAN BOOKS AND BIBLES ARE REQUIRED FOR THE BOOKSHOPS IN KENYA**

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






# The Moderator Visits the ‘Pearl of Africa’


 **Above:** The pastors who attended the Conference.

**I**t was in the final months of 1907 and into early 1908 that Winston Churchill journeyed across some of the Eastern parts of the vast continent of Africa. His travels took him to Kenya and Sudan. He also visited Uganda. On his return home, Churchill published a book, entitled *My African Journey*, which chronicled his 5 month trip. In it he wrote, ‘For magnificence, for variety of form and colour, for the profusion of brilliant life – bird, insect, reptile, beast – for vast scale – Uganda is truly The Pearl of Africa.’

It was on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August that Rev David McMillan and I set out on our visit to ‘The Pearl of Africa’. As Churchill discovered, the natural beauty, diversity of plant and animal life, and vastness of the country are something to behold. However, amid such beautiful scenery, we discovered the Lord’s work progressing

 **Below:** The Carscaddens with the welcome gifts given by the Emmanuel Church



 **Above:** The end of term Primary School Assembly


unrelentingly. We were met at Entebbe Airport by Rev Ray Carscadden, who is still getting settled into his new surroundings with his wife, Rhonda, and children, John, George, and Isla Grace. Miss Noreen McAfee greeted us on our arrival at the Emmanuel Christian School. Mr McMillan and I were able to see the school first-hand and meet many of the children. Morning assembly at 7:30 am was an enjoyable experience with the children singing hymns and the Ugandan national anthem and listening to a morning devotion. As the school term was drawing to a close, Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> was set aside for two special school assemblies. Reports were given, prizes awarded, and I was pleased to be invited to address both Primary and Secondary pupils.

The two Lord’s days were given over, of course, to the ministry of the Word of God. On the first Sunday, the morning service was followed by a visit to one of the local prisons, where Rev McMillan preached. The morning meeting the following Lord’s Day was set aside

as a special welcome service for the Carscadden family. The church was packed to capacity, with many visitors keen to share in the occasion. Another prison was visited in the afternoon.

Part of our itinerary involved conducting a Pastors’ Conference under the theme of ‘Pastoring a Healthy Church’. A variety of subjects were addressed, and over fifty pastors from across Uganda plus four brethren from Kenya attended – many staying in the school accommodation.

The busy schedule meant that our time away seemed to pass very quickly. We are grateful to the Mission Board and Presbytery for the opportunity to participate in the visit. ‘The Pearl of Africa’ is still resplendent, but we rejoice that Christ, the ‘Pearl of Great Price’, continues to be proclaimed in that beautiful land. ■

 **Rev John Armstrong,**  
*Moderator of Presbytery September 2020 - September 2023.*

 **Below:** Preaching at the open-air meeting



## MISSIONARY VISION

# Great Interest in the Training Seminars



☑ Above: The Seminar at Markethill

The Mission Board held training seminars for the children's workers of our congregations over the first three Saturdays of September.

Over 150 people attended the events, held in Sandown, Magherafelt, and Markethill Free Presbyterian Churches. The training was given by the Children's Evangelists of our

denomination, Christina Logan, Joyce Walsh, and Robert McConnell along with Rev Ryan McKee.

Feedback from the seminars was very positive, with many saying they felt better equipped to reach the children, under their care, with the Gospel. At the start of each meeting, all were reminded that children's evangelism is

commanded and practised in Scripture.

As a Mission Board, we are thankful for so many in our churches who have a heart for the children of our country, and we pray that the Lord will be pleased to use each who attended to lead many boys and girls to the Saviour. ■

☑ **Rev Ryan McKee**, *Seminar Leader*.

## Sincere Thanks to all Fundraisers

As we look back over this year, we would like to record our deep appreciation for the faithful financial support for missionary work under the Mission Board. This has been another year when our work has expanded, and where the funds to support that expansion have been generously provided. In addition to all of the offerings at deputation meetings, the regular monthly support through the Missionary Council, and the appeals and projects that you support, I would especially like to thank those who fundraise for a specific cause that is close to their hearts.

There are too many such fundraisers to report on each one separately, but we want to let you know that we really appreciate the work to plan and manage these events to raise funds in this way. So, whether it is the Coffee Morning for the Uganda School, or the sponsored hair cut for the Carscadden family, or the sale of pens at special events, or proceeds from BBQs, or the table quizzes, or the Craft Fairs, or the sale of knitted goods, and much more – all are really appreciated and make such a difference.

In addition to raising the funds, these are also great opportunities to provide more information about the supported cause, which is such an encouragement to those involved. As a Mission Board, we are encouraged by the reports of these special efforts, month by month, and we would like to take this opportunity to say, "Thank you!" in the Lord's name. ■

☑ **Mr Alastair Hamilton**  
*Mission Board Treasurer*.



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FREE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
**International  
Congress  
2024**

**MONDAY 1 - FRIDAY 5  
JULY 2024, 8PM**

*Venue:*  
**MARTYRS MEMORIAL  
FREE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**

Speakers from home and abroad taking part  
*Please pray for and plan to attend  
these special meetings.*



# Dates For The Diary

## NOVEMBER

12<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>

**HILLSBOROUGH FPC,  
WEEK OF MINISTRY MEETINGS**

*Preacher:* Rev John Greer

*Topic:* **Revival Highlights in Ezra**

*Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>:*

*The God of Revival*

*Monday 13<sup>th</sup>:*

*The Order That Marks a Revived Church*

*Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup>:*

*Worship That Characterises Revival*

*Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>:*

*Satan's Overtures in Revival Times*

*Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>:*

*Ezra – The Right Man at The Right Time*

*Friday 17<sup>th</sup>:*

*The Hand of God On the Man of God*

20<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>

**BANGOR FPC,  
TEACHING WEEK**

*Speaker:* Rev Higginson

*Topic:* **Principles of Revival in the Prophecy  
of Ezekiel**

*Time:* 8.00pm (except Saturday)

19<sup>th</sup> - 1<sup>st</sup> Dec

**CLOGHER VALLEY FPC,  
GOSPEL MISSION**

*Time:* Sundays 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm

*Evangelists:* Mr Noel Shields & Mr Colin Maxwell  
(Concluding with a Carol Service  
on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December.)

## JANUARY 2024

12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>

**HEBRON FPC, ANNUAL MISSIONARY  
CONVENTION WEEKEND**

*Theme:* **'Lift up your eyes and look of the fields'**

*Time:* Fri 8.00pm, Sat 7.30pm,

Sun 12noon & 7.00pm

*Missionary reports & presentations from  
around the world*

*Special Singing at each service*

Free Presbyterian  
**VISION**

