

Free Presbyterian  
**VISION**

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

Imago  
Dei:  
Made in the  
Image of God

Coping  
with  
Bereavement

Why Serve God  
Now While Young?

JULY  
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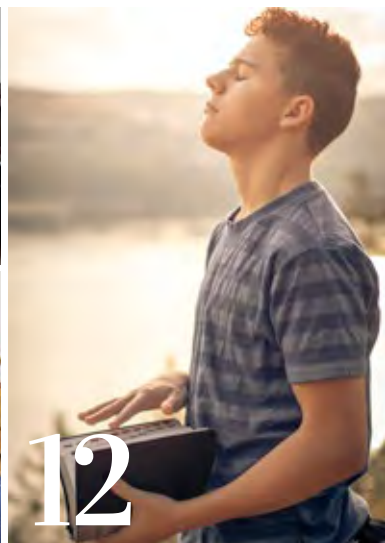
Our pulse (or heart rate) tells us a lot about our own heart. As the heart beats it pushes blood around the body and this 'heartbeat' can be detected in such places as wrist or neck. There are all sorts of reasons why our pulse or heart rate may be faster than normal. It is said that Athletes or people who are very fit may have a resting heart beat of less than 60 bpm. To have no pulse whatsoever - can only mean one thing.

Not too long ago, I came across the words of Bishop J C Ryle. As a family we are reading through one of his commentaries on the Gospels. He commented most pointedly on the words of Mark 1:35, '...he (Jesus) went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed'.

Ryle went on to say, 'we shall do well to watch our habits of prayer with a holy watchfulness. Here is the pulse of our Christianity. Here is the true test of our state before God. Here true religion begins in the soul...here it decays and goes backward, when a man backslides from God.' Convicting words indeed. Everyone at some stage in their life has tried to take their own pulse - usually from the neck or wrist. Maybe you have had experiences like me when it appears nothing can be felt and for a fleeting moment you question whether your heart is actually beating! When was the last time we read our prayer pulse? Is the beat regular and steady or is it faint or very irregular. Is there any prayer pulse whatsoever?

The challenges of today are many and varied but in the day of our Lord Jesus they were also present. He, the Godman, still saw the need to retreat for prayer. How much more should we? May our souls beat and pant for the living God in a day when few will call upon Him. ■

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



“When you are overwhelmed with sadness, it can seem pointless to pray. You may feel too weak and emotionally distracted to read the Bible, be with your Christian friends, and attend the times of public worship, but you need these spiritually productive habits in your life, now more than ever. God has called you to do these things because they encourage your heart and strengthen your soul.”

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Although only used twice in the Word of God, the word ‘pilgrim’ fitly describes the Christian’s journey on earth. We long for another world, and like our namesake in John Bunyan’s ‘Pilgrim’s Progress’, we suffer from homesickness. Our hearts often yearn for the Celestial City of God.

Like any journey we make in life, this journey to our heavenly rest is not without its obstacles. Every Christian pilgrim must go through the valley of tears (Psalm 84:6). Despite the constant proclamations from the prosperity gospel brigade, there is no such evidence in Scripture that guarantees the pilgrim an easy road to glory. Rather, God’s Word clearly teaches that we will often have to endure hardships along this narrow path. Thomas Manton wrote, ‘As the way to Canaan lay through a howling wilderness and desert, so the path to heaven lies through much affliction.’

In John 16:33 the Saviour tells us, ‘in the world ye shall have tribulation...’. Those words alone do not seem to bring much encouragement to the believer as they battle over the rough terrain of this pilgrimage but the verse does not end there. Christ goes on to comfort His disciples by telling them, ‘...but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’

Fear not, dear Pilgrim, for we are not alone in this journey! God is with us, and God’s people are with us. Yes, we must all go through the valley of Baca, but God’s grace will transform it into a valley of showers of blessing. God will never forsake His pilgrims nor leave them as defenceless orphans. David was aware of this when he affirmed, ‘Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.’ (Psalm 23:4).



“  
*Fear not, dear Pilgrim, for we are not alone in this journey! God is with us, and God’s people are with us.*  
”

What we must constantly keep before us is that this world is not our home. This is just our temporary dwelling place. We should endeavour to live with our suitcases packed! C.H. Spurgeon wrote, ‘How can I look to be at home in the enemy’s country, joyful while in exile, or comfortable in the wilderness? This is not my rest.’

Therefore, our focus must be on Christ as we travel along the pathway of life. He must be constantly in view. At times we have different paths to traverse, some more difficult than others, but the exhortation of Scripture remains the same for each child of God. Let all be ‘Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith’. Dear Pilgrim, a better home awaits, and every trial we encounter along our earthly journey

will pale into insignificance, when we gaze upon the King of Glory! Take comfort from the pen of Charles Wesley:

‘Strangers and pilgrims here below,  
This earth, we know, is not our place;  
We hasten through this vale of woe,  
And, restless to behold Thy face,  
Swift to our heavenly country move,  
Our everlasting home above.

We’ve no abiding city here,  
But seek a city out of sight;  
Thither our steady course we steer,  
Aspiring to the plains of light,  
Jerusalem, the saints’ abode,  
Whose founder is the living God.’ ■

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

# Presbyterianism



*“Desiring His church to be well ordered, the Lord has laid down in Scripture patterns and principles for its governance.”*

**M**any Christians give little or no consideration to church government. To them, it is like a spark plug in a car engine. They know it is important but do not give it a second thought. Yet if it was not there, or was broken, they would notice very quickly. There are several reasons why church government is important:

First and foremost, God has set out in His word how His church should be governed.

Secondly, a sound biblical structure will make a church more able to sustain its witness over many decades.

Thirdly, anyone that doubts the need for church order should think back to their school days and remember those times when the teacher left the classroom for a few moments. In the absence of authority mischief and chaos quickly entered. Without government, the church will quickly slide into error and anarchy.

Desiring His church to be well ordered, the Lord has laid down in Scripture patterns and principles for its governance. Generally speaking, there are three prominent forms of church government used today. These are as follows:

### ***Episcopal***

This system considers the bishop as the principal officer. Decisions are made at levels higher than the local church. It is the system of government adopted by Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism.

### ***Congregational***

It maintains that all members have equal responsibility in deciding and directing the affairs of the church. It is a self-contained entity which answers to nobody else; not to the presbytery, not to the synod, not to the general assembly.

### ***Presbyterian***

This form of government is by elders and deacons, elected by the

congregation, ruling by the Word of God and with the guidance of the Spirit. Such an arrangement was not developed by the Reformers but it is the explicit teaching of Scripture. Christ rules by His Word through elders. Let us look a bit more closely at certain roles and functions within Presbyterianism.

### **BISHOPS OR ELDERS**

Paul and Barnabas ordained ‘elders in every church’ (Acts 14:23). In Acts 20 Paul addressing the elders in Ephesus referred to them as ‘overseers’ (Acts 20:28). The word ‘oversee’ is translated four times in the New Testament as ‘bishop’. Speaking to the same people he referred to them as elders and then as bishops. Again, in Titus 1:5 we find Paul telling Titus to ‘ordain elders in every city’. Going on to explain their character he said in verse 7, ‘For a bishop must be blameless’. It is not that Presbyterians have no bishops but that all their elders are bishops. They are the same office.

## PLURALITY OF ELDERS

In Acts 20 Paul ‘called the elders of the church’ to meet with him (Acts 20:17). While the word ‘church’ is singular yet the word ‘elders’ is plural. There was a plurality of elders in this church. Again, in Titus, Paul speaks of appointing elders in every city. In the New Testament, the word ‘elder’ with very few exceptions is always used in the plural. There was to be a plurality of elders in every church. Solomon reminds us, ‘In the multitude of counsellors there is safety’ (Prov. 11:14).

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF ELDERS

Writing to Timothy Paul said, ‘Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine’ (1 Timothy 5:17). The word ‘doctrine’ means ‘to teach’. As well as ruling, some of the elders were given the added responsibility of teaching the Word of God. Commenting on these words John Calvin wrote, ‘We may learn from this, that there were at that time two kinds of elders; for all were not ordained to teach. The words plainly mean, that there were some who “ruled well” and honourably, but who did not hold the office of teachers. And, indeed, there were chosen from among the people men of worth and of good character, who, united with the pastors in a common council and authority administered the discipline of the Church’.

In the church, there are two types of elders. There is the teaching elder, who is the minister of the Word, and the pastor, who is called by God and ordained by the Presbytery to preach the Word. Then there are ruling elders. These are men from the congregation who join with the minister in governing the Church and exercising spiritual oversight. However, while their gifts and responsibilities vary, one is not superior to the other. There is parity among all elders.

## DUTIES OF THE ELDER

The duties of the elder are several. He is called to settle disputes in the church (Acts 15), feed the flock

(1 Peter 5:1-2), protect the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17, 28-31), visit the sick and pray with them (James 5:14; Acts 6:4), spend time in prayer and teaching the Word (Acts 6:4) and watch out for the spiritual life of the flock (Hebrew 13:17). Simply put, he should be a peacemaker, a prayer warrior, a teacher, and a decision-maker and should lead by example.

## HONOURING THE ELDER

Paul said, ‘Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine’ (1 Timothy 5:17). As the British ambassador is honoured in foreign countries, not because of who he is but because he is the Queen’s representative, so there is to be an honouring of the elder - especially the minister of the Word.

## PRESBYTERY

In Acts 15 certain teachers maintained that unless a person was circumcised, they could not be saved. They aimed to bring the Gentile converts under the yoke of the Jewish ceremonial law. Paul and Barnabas sought to resolve the matter by appealing to a plurality of apostles and elders from various churches. They gathered in Jerusalem and debated the issue until they reached a consensus on the matter. This was the first Presbytery meeting. Their decision being communicated to the churches in Antioch and Syria, we read ‘as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep’ (Acts 16:4). All the churches were bound by their decision.

It establishes the principle that the lesser church court is subordinate to the

greater. The New Testament model is not one of independence as practised by Baptists and Congregationalists. It is many congregations but one church. That is why we use the term, ‘Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster.’ We are one church, under one authority.

## DEACONS

In the early church many of its members were in great material need, and so, those who were able, gave of their possessions to meet the situation. The administration of the supplies was time-consuming for the apostles. It meant they were pulled away from their vital ministry in the Word of God. In solving the matter, they told the congregation to choose out seven men of an honest report to look after this business. While the word ‘deacon’ does not appear in Acts 6 it is derived from the word ‘ministration’ in verse 1. It is clear from Scripture that while the elder was given the spiritual oversight of the flock, deacons were entrusted with material affairs. After their appointment, the difficulties in the church in Jerusalem were resolved. Consequently, God’s Word kept on spreading, the number of disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and even a great many of the Jewish priests became obedient to the faith (Acts 6:4).

Rather than being irrelevant, the good government of the church is vital to its progress. When the Scriptural pattern, Presbyterianism, is followed it greatly helps maintain the purity, unity and peace of Christ’s church. ■

✍ **Rev Thomas Murray,**  
*Lurgan Free Presbyterian Church.*



**“Rather than being irrelevant, the good government of the church is vital to its progress. When the Scriptural pattern, Presbyterianism, is followed it greatly helps maintain the purity, unity and peace of Christ’s church.”**



## MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

**Y**ou will not read very far into the Bible until you meet with the subject of this article. ‘And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: ...so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them’ (Genesis 1:26-27). The change in the Biblical narrative from, ‘let there be’ to ‘let us make’ alerts the reader that something even more momentous is going to happen on the sixth day. On this day God made man, the crowning work of all His creation, making him in His own ‘image’ and ‘likeness’. These verses introduce the subject. Do not let the title put you off. Imago Dei is a Latin

phrase which means ‘image of God’.

Of what does the image of God in man consist? We shall consider what this image means, its importance, and some practical implications of it in our lives.

### **THE MEANING OF ‘MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD’**

Since he was made in the image of God, that image had to be perfect. God’s own perfection is seen in all His creative works, but in none more so than in man. His pronouncement was, ‘it was all very good.’ Ecclesiastes 7:9 confirms this when it says, ‘God made man upright.’ How are we to understand the image of God in man?

The Westminster Confession is helpful on this point. ‘After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, ... endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after his own image’ (ch.4, section 2). We must not look for the image of God in man as something material or physical, for God is pure spirit. Rather this image is found in man’s original state of righteousness. As Bavinck put it, ‘To be human is to be an image-bearer of God, created in his likeness and originally righteous and holy.’

When we link Genesis 1:26-27 and 5:3 we have an echo that the image of God that was stamped on Adam

was perpetuated in his offspring. In other words, the whole human race continued to possess the image of God, even after the fall. That the image of God was not lost completely by mankind's fall into a sinful state, is seen in Genesis 9:6 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.' Murder is prohibited because all mankind is in God's image.

In the New Testament, we see that fallen sinners are still considered to be in the image of God. Calvin writes, 'Wherefore, although we grant that the image of God was not utterly effaced and destroyed in him, it was, however, so corrupted, that anything which remains is fearful deformity; and, therefore, our deliverance begins with that renovation which we obtain from Christ, who is, therefore, called the second Adam ("man"), because he restores us to true and substantial integrity.' Berkhof agrees, 'As created in the image of God man has a rational and moral nature, which he did not lose by sin and which he could not lose without ceasing to be man. This part of the image of God has indeed been vitiated by sin, but still remains in man even after his fall in sin. Notice that man even after the fall, irrespective of his spiritual condition, is still represented as the image of God, Gen. 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7; Jas. 3:9. In view of these passages of Scripture it is unwarranted to say that man has completely lost the image of God.'

The Apostle Paul in his Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians teaches us how this image which was effaced but not erased, is then restored through regeneration. The underlying idea of Paul is that mankind was originally created in God's image but in regeneration is 'renewed in knowledge,' (Colossians 3:10) 'righteousness and true holiness.' (Eph 4:24)

### THE IMPORTANCE OF 'MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD'

It is important to understand this truth of man in the image of God for several reasons. Firstly, we cannot adequately understand the Gospel and

what it does for us if we do not grasp the significance of God's image in man originally, and how it has been defaced and how it is restored in Christ. This doctrine brings us to realize the high and holy position we have fallen from. It shows us how far short we come from that original state of righteousness which made us acceptable and pleasing to God.

Secondly, it reveals the wonderful restoration that Christ by His death effects in the believer in Him. It gives us an appreciation of the efficacy and benefits of Christ's death. It enables us to see the great scheme of redemption in a four-fold way. We see man in God's image as original, perverted, renewed and perfected. "This image has been lost, in the fall, and regained, in redemption" (Dabney). Only He who made us can make us again and restore us in His likeness. That's why Paul was able to say in 2 Corinthians 5:17 "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," (or new creation).

### THE IMPLICATIONS OF 'MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD'

When we view man as being created in the image of His Maker this contradicts the evolutionary view that man progressed from an inferior form to a better one. Since man was made in the image of God, he had to perfectly reflect His Creator's image. Man was not made as a brute beast but was superior in that he and he only bore God's image in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness.

Adam's knowledge was extensive. This was seen in his naming of all the animals. His knowledge primarily and pre-eminently centred upon knowing God. As one recreated in Christ our knowledge of Christ should be growing daily. Once our knowledge of God was dim, now it should be growing brighter and more blissful.

Adam in his pristine state reflected God's image in his righteousness. He not only was perfectly righteous but only wanted to pursue after righteousness. As those who through Christ's redemption are declared righteous

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ADAM IN HIS PRISTINE STATE REFLECTED GOD'S IMAGE IN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. HE NOT ONLY WAS PERFECTLY RIGHTEOUS BUT ONLY WANTED TO PURSUE AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS. AS THOSE WHO THROUGH CHRIST'S REDEMPTION ARE DECLARED RIGHTEOUS BEFORE GOD, LET US ALSO REMEMBER THAT WE ARE TO FOLLOW AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS.

before God, let us also remember that we are to follow after righteousness as 1 Timothy 6:11 commands us, 'But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.'

In his original state Adam was created with holiness as an intrinsic part of his makeup. His will, his affections and inclination went out fully after the Lord and desired to perfectly do His will. This is what the restoration into God's image moves every believer to seek after. We need to ask ourselves: Is there this evidence of God's renewing work in my life? Is there a positive endeavour after holiness in your life as was reflected in the unfallen Adam?

We should remember the great height from which we have fallen by the sin of the first Adam, and be humbled at our natural status before a holy God. On the other hand, let us rejoice when we remember the new standing that Christ the last Adam gives us, when we believe on Him. It is difficult to fully perceive how much we lost in losing God's image. Likewise, it is difficult to fully comprehend, in time, what we shall gain when we are fully restored in God's image on the day of resurrection! ■

✍ **Rev Wesley Irwin,**  
*Rutherglen Free Presbyterian Church.*


## Ordination and Installation of Mr Matthew Higgins

Rev Matthew Higgins was ordained and installed as minister of Limavady Free Presbyterian Church on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022. This special occasion took place in Magherafelt Free Presbyterian (kindly granted).




 Above: (L to R) Revs J Greer, G Lucas, M Higgins and J Armstrong



 Above: Rev Higgins pictured with wife, Leanne and son, Joel

## Elders Installed In Cloughmills

An installation service of Elders took place in Cloughmills Free Presbyterian Church on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Mr Lawrence Hanna and Mr Norman Hanna were installed as the first elders there in over 53 years.

 Right: (L to R) Mr N Hanna, Rev J Armstrong, Rev B Lorimer, Rev J Hanna, Mr L Hanna and Rev J Greer.



## Baptisms

A number of Baptismal services took place recently across some of our churches. Believers from our Comber, Newtownards and Cooktown congregations were baptised before friends and family. We give thanks for such meetings of these and trust God will take each believer on with Himself.



## Platinum Jubilee Thanksgiving

The children of Clogher Valley Free Presbyterian Church were each presented with a Platinum Jubilee edition of the Scriptures. Here they are pictured together with adults in the church who were born before the death of King George VI in 1952.




## John Knox Anniversary

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2022 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the commencement of John Knox Memorial Free Presbyterian Church. During both services past ministers were present to mark this special occasion. Pictured are both Rev D Creane and A Smylie (first and longest serving ministers respectively) alongside Rev J woods and Elder, Mr R Ferris.



## Elder Emeritus, Mount Merrion


Mount Merrion FPC marked the retirement of Mr John Dunn after 57 years as an office bearer. He served as an elder for 44 years. Among many who gathered to honour Mr Dunn for his faithful service were some former ministers.

 **Below:** Pictured alongside Mr John Dunn are Revs Paul Thompson, Fred Greenfield, Stanley Barnes, Ron Johnstone and Jim Hartin.



## A Special Birthday At Dungannon

A short service and family gathering was held recently to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Mrs Margaret Carrick, mother of Dungannon elder Mr. Mervyn Carrick.

 **Below:** Pictured (L to R) are Rev John Armstrong, Mrs Carrick with Mervyn and Alderman Glenn Barr, Lord Mayor of Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council.



## Portglenone Reaches Out To Local Schools

Rev David Stewart is pictured with Principals and children from two local schools as Portglenone Free Presbyterian gifted them special Jubilee commemorative Bibles printed by the Trinitarian Bible Society.



COMPILED BY  
ROBERT MCCONNELL



'...Take eat, this is my body, which is broken for you...'

1 Corinthians 11:24

## Broken is Best

From time to time we all break things. It can be very annoying, especially if it is something we are particularly fond of. Now, unless it is easily mended, whenever something gets broken, that's the end of it. However, sometimes in the Bible, if something gets broken, then that's only the start of it...not the end.

For example, whenever Gideon had to face the Midianite army with only three hundred men, God sent them into the battle with only two things. One was a trumpet-like horn and the other was a large clay pot, inside of which was concealed a very bright lamp. Gideon's men quietly encircled the camp of the Midianites under the cover of darkness. Then, whenever the signal was given, they stood up, blew loudly on their horns and broke open the clay pots to reveal the bright lamps inside.

It took tremendous courage and faith in God on their part, because having roused the enemy they had no weapons of any kind to defend themselves with. God rewarded their obedience, because the noise of the horns blowing and the glare of the bright lamps threw the Midianites into disarray. Tumbling out of their tents, half asleep, and unable to see clearly, they lunged out in every direction with their weapons and ended up killing each other. Breaking those pots in obedience brought a great victory to God's

people. In a world full of darkness and with a great enemy before us, we too can have the same victory by breaking forth and shining bright for God and by trumpeting the truth of the Gospel with our voices. God will do the rest. God will give the victory, causing us to realise that broken is indeed best.

The New Testament is full of examples of 'broken is best'. Think of the bread that was broken to feed the five thousand. Think of the nets that began to break with the huge catch of fish. Think of the alabaster box of perfume broken by Mary to anoint the Saviour. However, the greatest example of brokenness is the very means whereby we as sinners can be saved. You see, shortly before the Saviour laid down his life for us upon the cross, he gathered his disciples in the upper room. Sitting there, he lifted the bread and said, 'This is my body broken for you.' The Lord Jesus was illustrating that soon afterwards he would be taken away to be bruised, battered and broken upon the cross to save us from our sin.

I wonder if you rejoice today in the broken body and the precious shed blood of the Lord Jesus, because having trusted in him, he is now your Saviour. Pondering over the great sacrifice that he made for you, you can now say, of a truth that, 'broken is best.'



## WORD SEARCH



Find in the grid below some of the many things that are described as broken in God's Word. The remaining letters make up the answer to one last thing that is not easily broken which is mentioned in the Bible. Clue - read Ecclesiastes Chapter 4.

9	2	S	P	I	R	I	T	N	B	3	4	5	6
W	A	L	L	S	O	F	J	E	R	I	C	H	O
7	R	8	9	H	4	2	3	T	E	4	1	5	6
7	M	H	8	I	9	4	2	S	A	3	T	4	5
6	S	E	7	P	O	T	S	8	D	9	Y	2	3
A	L	A	B	A	S	T	E	R	B	O	X	4	5
6	7	R	8	9	2	3	C	O	R	D	4	5	6
7	8	T	9	2	3	B	O	D	Y	4	7	8	9

- Q WALLS OF JERICO
- Q BODY
- Q NETS
- Q SHIP
- Q POTS
- Q ARMS
- Q ALABASTER BOX
- Q CITY
- Q HEART
- Q SPIRIT
- Q BREAD



ANSWER:

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## PRIZES!

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



# My Favourite

# Hymn



This ‘simple’ hymn teaches us to survey the cross and meditate on it. It presents vivid imagery of the suffering Christ, with blood flowing from his head, his hands, his feet. Martyn Lloyd-Jones referenced ‘When I Survey’ in his book ‘The Cross’. He said that Christ’s cross displays ‘the most amazing paradoxes that the world...ever can know.

It is almost impossible to describe these. I must call upon another poet to help me. Thank God that they have seen it and said it.’

Watts’s expression of these paradoxes sets our minds to worship. In just a line or two, he conveys the futility of earthly wealth; the meeting of love and sorrow; the crown of thorns; and the death of Christ our God. In a powerful conclusion, he glories in God’s love and calls for consecration of soul, life, and all.

‘When I Survey’ originally had five stanzas but Watts recommended the fourth not be published as it was ‘too particular for whole congregations to sing.’ Reflecting on Watts’s full work, David W. Music enlightens us as to the level of artistry displayed:

‘One of the most remarkable structural features of the text is its use of chiasmus (the crossing of words or ideas) in the third stanza, where “Sorrow and Love” is reversed to become “Love and Sorrow.” The Greek letter chi (X), which gives this rhetorical figure its name, has often been used as a symbol of the cross; it is also the first letter in the word “Christ.” Since this chiasmus occurs in the exact centre of the hymn (the middle lines in the third of five stanzas), it appears Watts has placed a symbol of both the cross and the Man who was crucified on that cross at the very heart of the hymn.’ ■

✍ **Mr Stephen Greer,**  
*Student, Whitefield College of the Bible*

## ‘BUT GOD FORBID THAT I SHOULD GLORY, SAVE IN THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.’ Galatians 6:14

The theme of Christ and His Cross is worthy of unparalleled praise. Our best efforts require the work of poets who can render Scriptural truth in suitable form. Perhaps the finest lyrics on the theme of Christ’s cross are found in ‘When I Survey’ by Isaac Watts.

Watts (1674-1748) was an English Christian scholar. As a teen, Isaac complained about the poor quality of Scriptural paraphrase for public worship, calling some ‘cheap doggerel.’ When his father challenged him to do better, he produced his first hymn the following week.

While working as a tutor, Watts studied Hebrew and Theology in free time. His publications include a textbook on Logic. This academic foundation explains why Watts’s hymns are marked by ‘simplicity, tender faith, and serene piety.’

In 1707, Watts, now Pastor of a Congregational church, published a first collection of hymns which included ‘When I Survey.’ These works

were more sophisticated and poetic than those of previous generations. Inevitably, this change brought opposition, including the claim of forsaking the Psalms. For several generations, English Protestants had been following the musical tradition of the Psalms-only John Calvin rather than the hymn-singing Martin Luther.

True, Watts did not support exclusive psalmody, but many of his hymns are Psalm paraphrases (Joy to the World, Psalm 98). Watts was focused on producing a high quality of sacred song that was founded on the Word of God, Psalms or otherwise. Samuel Johnson said that Watts showed ‘elegance might consist with piety.’

Watts’s elegant expression is perfectly demonstrated in ‘When I Survey.’ He wrote it in a simple metre to suit familiar tunes. Erik Routley said, ‘It surely must be agreed that this is the most penetrating of all hymns, the most demanding, the most imaginative. It is these things precisely because its style is so simple.’



## Why Serve God

NOW WHILE YOUNG?

In answering this important question let me give you five reasons.

### **SERVING GOD NOW IS LOVING BECAUSE OF CHRIST'S MERCY**

The apostle John says in 1 John 4:19, 'We love him, because he first loved us.'

Think how much Christ has served you in order to rescue you from the unimaginable horrors of Hell.

- » Did Christ not serve you with His heart – setting His love upon you in eternity for salvation? (Romans 8:29-30)
- » Did Christ not serve you with His time – coming to this earth and using every moment of His thirty-three years to purchase a perfect righteousness for you? (Mark 10:45)
- » Did Christ not serve you with His mouth – revealing to you and me the fulness of the Gospel in the New Testament? (Hebrews 1:2)
- » Did Christ not serve you with His whole body and soul when He endured six hours of

incomprehensible agony above and beyond the scourging and crucifying He received on the cross – all to satisfy the wrath we deserved from the Hand of God?

- » Even today, does not Christ serve you with His eyes and ears – ever seeing your needs and listening to your prayers? (Psalm 34:15)
- » Furthermore, does Christ not serve you with His prayers – ever living to pray for your acceptance with God and your daily blessings? (Hebrews 7:25)

If Christ has shown you and me such mercy and love, is it not loving that we should serve Him back - presenting our bodies a living and thankful sacrifice (Romans 12:1)?

### **SERVING GOD NOW IS RIGHT WHEN YOU THINK OF OUR DUTY**

Someone has said, 'Knowing who you are guides you in knowing how to live'. In addition to the many other wonderful titles Scripture gives to God's people, 1 Corinthians 7:22 tells us the child of God is '...Christ's servant'. This title has within it the idea of 'slave'.

A slave is one who is bought and owned by another. Subsequently, a slave has no purpose but that of his owner's purpose for him. This may seem like strong language but in 1 Corinthians 6:20 we are told, 'ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.'

Dear reader, do you realise that when you put your faith in Christ for salvation you did not only ask Christ to be your Saviour, you asked Christ to be your Lord (Romans 10:9)?

### **SERVING GOD NOW IS PROFITABLE WHEN YOU THINK OF HEAVEN'S GLORY**

I remember well one of the first sermons I ever preached. Having studied accountancy for four years at university and the many different forms of taxation imposed upon UK citizens, I couldn't help but see the humour and (at the same time) solemn comparison of Haggai 1:6 to our own day. Haggai says to God's people, 'he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.'

Consider the following holes that exist for your salary after you have worked hard to earn it.

- » Hole 1: Income Tax takes 20% (and potentially 45%) from that salary.
- » Hole 2: National Insurance takes 12%.
- » Hole 3: From what money that remains, if you spend it VAT takes 20% from each penny.
- » Hole 4: If you save your money, 20% (and potentially 45%) of that saving is taken from you.
- » Hole 5: If you invest the money, 20% (and potentially 28%) is taken from profits.
- » Hole 6: The saddest hole of all. Once you think you've lost enough through the above five holes all your life and you can leave what remains to your family, Inheritance Tax takes a final 40% on everything combined above a certain value.

More taxes/holes could be mentioned but notice how different things are when you live for Christ and eternity! Instead of there being a loss there is a gain!

- » Christ gives you a reward for every moment of service – even the giving of a cup of water (Hebrews 6:10, Mark 9:41)
- » This reward is not simply a 20% increase but a 5000% increase (100 times more than what you put in, Matthew 19:29)
- » This reward will be able to be enjoyed much longer than a few years on this earth. It will be enjoyed for eternity! (Matthew 25:20-30)

Do the following words of Christ not speak loudly? 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal' (Matthew 6:19-20).

### **SERVING GOD NOW IS WISE WHEN YOU THINK OF LIFE'S BREVIETY**

How long do you have to lay up a treasure in heaven by loving Christ and obeying Him as Lord?

While the UK's government website, 'Office for National Statistics' informs us the average life expectancy of males in the UK is 79 and females is 83 yet God tells us 'ye know not what shall be on the morrow'.

It is only 'If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.' (James 4:13-15)

Is it not loving, faithful and wise to heed the example of Him who loved us and say, 'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work' (John 9:4)?

### **SERVING GOD NOW IS CRUCIAL WHEN YOU THINK OF PROVIDENCE'S OPPORTUNITY**

The apostle Paul only got one chance to speak to Agrippa; Uzzah only got one chance to honour God's glory; king Saul only got one chance to destroy God's enemy the Amalekites; and Lot's wife only got one chance to flee Sodom.

While it is true God will often give us second chances, it is also true God may just give us one opportunity for specific service. Failure to take the opportunity God is giving you to love and obey Him *now* may result in you never having that opportunity again.

### **HOW CAN I SERVE GOD?**

A cartoonist once drew a picture of a woman lying on the living-room sofa. She was ill, exhausted and worn out. In the kitchen next door there were two large piles of dirty dishes in the sink and a cat licking spilled milk on the floor. The woman's corridor also contained a huge basket of clothes to be ironed and in a bedroom were two dirty children who were screaming at each other. A neighbour visited the home to say hello and after spending time with the worn-out woman she rose to leave only to say bewilderingly on the way out the door, 'By the way,

Laura, if there is ever anything I can do to help, don't you hesitate to let me know'.

The local church is not much different. There are those few who are overwhelmed and burdened with more work than they can handle. Sick people needing visited; older people needing company; the outreach team needing helpers; visitors needing someone to befriend

them; ministers and teachers needing encouragement. You can encourage others to come to God's House. You will be an encouragement to others when praying at the church prayer meetings. By signing up to Youth Council outreaches you will be a blessing to many more. The list goes on and yet there will be those who stand on the side-lines and with a smile say, 'If there is ever anything I can do to help, don't you hesitate to let me know.'

Dear reader, I encourage you not to simply wait for someone to approach you but to proactively look around and see the needs that exist (such as those mentioned above). When you have done this, go to your minister/elder/youth leader and ask them to advise how you could best meet such needs. While we are not saved *by service* we are saved *for service*. ■

✉ **Rev Paul Foster,**  
*Dromore Free Presbyterian Church*





# CASTLEWELLAN RETREAT

The Castlewellan retreat was held from 29<sup>th</sup> April- 2nd May 2022. Over 120 young people aged 15-29 came along. This year's theme was 'Beholding Christ', with the focus on the events leading up to the cross. Each day, around 20-40 young people met voluntarily for an hour of prayer; and I have to say, sitting with other young people and praying together was a wonderful way to start the day. Afterwards we had breakfast, followed by the morning meeting.

All of the messages were challenging, but also practical and relevant to the young people, and showed us the example we should seek to follow in thankfulness for Christ who gave His utmost for us. It was a real blessing to

have so many young people brought together under the Word of God enjoying fellowship together.

We also had a great time playing lots of games. Between tug of war, wheelbarrow races and water fights, there was never a dull moment!

The highlight of the weekend for me had to be the late-night chats on various topics of the Bible. One question that stood out to me was 'Is it ok to go out to clubs/parties, if you don't drink?'. Rev P Foster answered this by bringing us to Psalm 1. This Psalm shows that children of God are not to walk like the world or enjoy company with sinful practices, and that there is a blessing for those who

seek and enjoy God in His word. The question time was going so well that in the wee hours of the morning Rev P Foster managed to lose his voice!

Castlewellan was one of the best weekends away I've ever had. Not only did I get to meet lots of new people, but I also came away with a greater understanding of the love of God for sinners. I realised that if I wanted to become more Christ-like, I needed to 'Behold Christ' every day in His Word because it is only when we see Him, that we will be like Him. (1 John 3:2)

P.S. Long live Barry the fish...if you know, you know! ■

✍ **Joshua Ellis**

## TRAINING WEEKEND

The 2022 training weekend was a weekend filled with great Christian fellowship among fifteen young people who stayed for the full weekend, with a few more joining for the studies on Saturday. It took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> March in the Portadown Faith Mission Centre.

The weekend started off on the Friday night with a devotional by Rev P Foster on the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was followed by a time of prayer which was a blessing to us all before having fellowship, where we got to know each other. On the Saturday, we gathered for a time of prayer before

breakfast, and once fuelled with food and coffee we began the lectures. There were eight lectures throughout the day taken by the Revs Mercer, McKee, Foster and Mr Colin Maxwell.

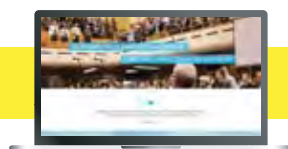
The subjects studied included the reliability of the Bible, advantages of evangelising within a Presbyterian structure, preparing messages for children, overcoming barriers in evangelism, experiences in evangelism, what truths must be understood and focused on for salvation, important texts for evangelism, and seeking the will of God. We had various breaks where we could ask questions to the lecturers,

stretch our legs, or get another cup of coffee so we could keep learning despite the late night! We finished with a devotion from the Rev Foster as he challenged our knowledge surrounding the events of the resurrection day.

We attended Bethany Free Presbyterian Church on the Lord's Day morning and were then treated to a wonderful Sunday dinner by the helpers who kept us well fed throughout the entire weekend. It truly was a wonderful weekend, and I highly recommend all young people to come along next year. ■

✍ **Esther McKee**

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A Word to Women

# Willing Hands and a Humble Heart

*“Are we using our hands alongside a humble heart, seeking to serve and glorify the Lord? We must examine our hearts before we use our hands to act.”*

**T**he Bible has much to say about hands, mentioning them roughly 1294 times across 54 of the 66 books. Allow me to pose some heart-probing questions regarding your hands. These same questions have challenged me, and I pray they will be used to challenge and encourage you too.

Can you say you are like the virtuous woman who, in Proverbs 31, is described as having willing hands and displaying a strong work ethic as she tackles each of her tasks (v13)? Are your hands fit for purpose, willing and ready to undertake each responsibility the Lord has graciously and providentially given to you? Or do you use them to carry out tasks begrudgingly, accompanied by sighing and grumbling, or even lazily, doing the bare minimum of what is necessary to pass as acceptable?

As a mother of four young children, I use my hands a lot to prepare meals for hungry tummies, wipe runny noses, and fold laundry! Mundane they may be, but when these tasks are completed with a willing heart, they can all bring glory to God. We can often feel that we're not

serving God as effectively as if we were on the 'frontline' of the mission field or serving as regularly as we'd like in the main ministries within the church. But, dear mothers, be encouraged - as C H Spurgeon said so eloquently:

'You are as much serving God in looking after your children, and training them up in God's fear, and minding the house, and making your household a church for God, as you would be if you had been called to lead an army to battle for the Lord of hosts.'

Before beginning his public ministry, Jesus worked alongside His earthly father, Joseph, as a carpenter. It was a lowly profession, yet Jesus laboured with willing hands, knowing it was exactly the work His Heavenly Father wanted Him to do. During His years of public ministry, Jesus used his hands to serve, bless, heal, and perform miracles. Ultimately, when Jesus 'became obedient unto death' on the cross (Philippians 2:8), it was those same hands which were nailed to the cross for us. Even when He knew it would cause unspeakable pain, Christ gave His hands willingly.

Colossians 3:23 reminds us that, whatever we do, it should be done 'as to the Lord and not unto men'. Are we using our hands alongside a humble heart, seeking to serve and glorify the Lord? Or do we desire that we would be magnified and receive praise? When we write a post for social media, is it to honour our Lord, or is it to make ourselves look and feel good as we count the 'likes' it receives? Are we raising our children to behave well for us, or are we seeking to reach their hearts for the Lord so that He would be glorified?

We must examine our hearts before we use our hands to act. So, as you use your hands today – take a moment to thank the Lord for the gift that they are. Ask Him for willing hands and a humble heart to do the work His perfect providence has given you and do it with 'all thy might' and 'to the glory of God.' (Ecclesiastes 9:10, 1 Corinthians 10:31). ■

✉ **Chloe Foster**

*is married to Rev Paul Foster, Dromore Free Presbyterian Church.*

## Newtownabbey

In April, our GCSE class visited London as part of their Government & Politics studies. The students thoroughly enjoyed the experience of visiting the Houses of Parliament and having refreshments on the terrace alongside the river Thames. They especially enjoyed witnessing PMQs in person and engaging with their local MP Mr Paul Girvan on what is involved in the role of a Member of Parliament.



## Portadown

☒ Pictured are some of the Primary pupils recently receiving a copy of the Scriptures to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Included is Rev Craig Dennison, Trinitarian Bible Society representative.

## Mourne

We were delighted to have a visit from Rev Craig Dennison who told us about the work of the Trinitarian Bible Society and presented each pupil with a special commemorative Platinum Jubilee Bible. Some pupils planted a crab apple tree to mark the Northern Ireland centenary.



## Bangor

BICS Key Stage One and Two pupils have been enjoying monitoring the progress of their bean plants as part of their study of living things in Science class. They were particularly delighted to see the progress after the Easter holidays. Key Stage Three and Four students recently took part in a 10 event competition in their P.E. classes. The overall winner was David McCaughey, who was also the winner of a penalty shoot competition. David is pictured here with the other students.





## Kilskeery



Our school is registered as an examination centre for Cambridge International as well as other local and national examination boards. We have been assisting a number of external candidates from home-schooling families all over Ireland to sit examinations and gain qualifications. We held a Victorian-themed school day and visited the C19<sup>th</sup> homesteads at the American Folk Park. Senior pupils designed and built some bird houses and learned to handle tools safely and under supervision.



Pupils of all ages like to have time outdoors and in our polytunnel, whether it is conducting a controlled GCSE investigation or improving horticultural skills and applying lessons learned in Creation Studies. A simple experiment to investigate the effect of protected cultivation on seedlings provided a striking spiritual illustration for Christian schools. May the Lord preserve the spiritual growth of our children as a garden enclosed, Song of Sol 4:12.

## Ballymoney



We have welcomed Miss Sarah Hanna onto our staff here in Ballymoney Independent Christian School. She has been a great encouragement and help in the work! Sarah is from Rasharkin Free Presbyterian Church and is studying with the Open University. Pray for her in her studies and in her work here in school that she will know the Lord's help and wisdom.

# Teaching Opportunities Within Christian Education

Some of the Christian Schools are in need of staff for the next school year beginning in September 2022. Applications are welcome for the following posts;

## Portadown

**LOWER PRIMARY TEACHER**

**SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER**

*(preferred subjects French, Spanish, English, Geography)*

**CLASSROOM ASSISTANT**

*Primary / Secondary School*

**Contact:** School Administrator or Principal for an application form.

**Rev D. Abernethy:** 07821 544625  
darrylabernethy@gmail.com

**Mrs D. Haffey:** 07510629500

d.haffey@independentchristianschool.org

## Mourne

**MATHS TEACHER**

**Contact:** School Administrator for application form.

**Mr G. Imrie:** 07714 530607  
gordonimrie@yahoo.co.uk

## Bangor

**SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER**

*Teaching Maths and Science*

*(other subjects may also be required within the Primary School)*

**Contact:** School Administrator or Principal for an application form.

**Mr D. Brown:** davidgeorgebrowne@gmail.com

**Bryan McVeigh:** School Board Secretary 07771791522  
ae.priestley@independentchristianschool.org

## Newtownabbey

**PRIMARY SCHOOL  
TEACHER**

*teaching Key Stage 1  
and/or Key Stage 2 classes*

or

**SECONDARY SCHOOL  
TEACHER**

*teaching 1 or more  
GCSE exam subjects.*

**Contact:** School Administrator or Principal for an application form.

**Rev B. McClung:** 07714 330390, newtownabbeyfpc@gmail.com  
**Mrs L. McClung:** lj.mcclung@independentchristianschool.org



# Coping with Bereavement

**N**othing is more shocking, emotional, or final than the death of a loved one. Your head spins with many thoughts, sentiments, and emotions. Your mind floods with things you wish you had said or done. You want to say, 'I love you,' one more time, and you want to hear it said to you. Your thoughts fill with fond and painful memories as you hold tightly to that treasured collection of keepsakes. You don't feel ready to say goodbye or deal with the grief that has overtaken you.

As we live, it becomes more and more evident that tragedy and heartache are no respecters of persons. It comes to us all, but not everyone may deal with grief the same way. Why does grief destroy some while others triumph over it? Here are some suggestions about how to deal with our grief.

## **BE HONEST ABOUT YOUR EMOTIONS**

Being a Christian does not mean being a stoic. God doesn't want you to hide your emotions or put on a happy face. He wants you to come to Him with complete honesty.

In the book of Psalms, God invites us to bring our honest grief to Him. Psalm 34:15 depicts God as a loving father, watching over His children and listening to their cries. Psalms 13, 42, and 73 (amongst others) picture God's people running to Him in their grief and confusion. Don't hide your emotions. When you are struggling, run to the One who knows you completely and loves you faithfully. As Peter says, 'Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.' 1 Peter 5:7.)

## **RUN TO WHERE COMFORT CAN BE FOUND**

When he was suffering, the apostle Paul said an amazing thing about the Lord, 'Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort' (2 Corinthians 1:3). All true, lasting comfort has its source in the Lord, because He is the Father of all compassion and comfort. Remind yourself that the Lord Jesus is a friend that loves us at all times, a brother born for adversity (Proverbs 17:17), and our great high priest who is touched with the feelings of our infirmities (Hebrews 4:15).

## **REMEMBER THAT GRIEF WILL PASS**

Following the death of his infant child, David did something quite remarkable, he 'arose from the earth, and washed

and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.' (2 Samuel 12:20).

David's response to the death of his son was an act of profound faith in the face of the most tragic of circumstances. Perhaps the saddest aspect of death, for those left behind, is that life goes on without pausing for even a moment. Maybe that is good in some ways. David realised that there came a time when he had to reconcile himself to the loss and move on. It wasn't that he was callous or indifferent to the death of his son; on the contrary, he was deeply affected, but he realised that life continues on.

Grief is a powerful emotion, filled with sadness, anxiety, fear, doubt, loneliness, helplessness, and despair; and yet, it serves a healing purpose. When the grieving process finishes, we learn to move on. We do not forget, but we get to move forward, learning to live a full and happy life, even as we miss and long for what we have lost. Ultimately, grief is something to go through, not hold on to! In one of the most comforting Psalms, David expresses this thought when he says, 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' (Psalm 23:4). Notice again, that this valley is one that we are to pass through and not stay in longer than necessary.

### SEEK HELP

When God saved us, He placed us into the body of believers, His church. We need the help of others in our lives to become the people God created us to be (See Ephesians 4:1-16 and 1 Corinthians 12). When your heart is breaking and your eyes are blinded by grief, you need the help of others more than ever. The godly friends that the Lord has placed in your life can help you see things you would otherwise miss. They can help you remember God's goodness when you are tempted to forget. They will exercise faith for

you when your own is weak. When you are in despair, they will bring the comfort of Christ to you. Don't try to go through your sadness alone. God has placed these helpers in your life. I would also suggest that you seek out the help of your Minister who will be able to deal with your specific questions about life, death, and eternity to come, and will continually point you to the Lord, the ultimate source of all our comfort.

### BE THANKFUL

Even in the darkest moments, you can find clear signs of God's presence and love. The apostle Paul puts it this way, 'In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.' (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Notice the little preposition 'in' within this verse. We are to be thankful in every situation. This doesn't mean that you will always be thankful for what you are going through, but it does mean that you can be thankful for what God is giving you in order to sustain you in your grief. In your darkness, there are always little lights of God's grace and love to be found. Pay attention to the good things God is doing, even in this dark moment, so your grief can be mixed with heartfelt gratitude.

### DON'T NEGLECT YOUR SPIRITUAL HABITS

When you are overwhelmed with sadness, it can seem pointless to pray. You may feel too weak and emotionally distracted to read the Bible, be with your Christian friends, and attend the times of public worship, but you need these spiritually productive habits in your life, now more than ever. God has called you to do these things because they encourage your heart and strengthen your soul. They remind you of who you are as a child of God and your Sovereign Saviour, and they help

you to remember that a time is coming when you won't have to face death ever again.

### SHARE THE COMFORT YOU HAVE RECEIVED

Scripture says that God comforts us so that we then might comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:3,4). If you have experienced God's comfort in your time of grief, you are uniquely able to understand what a fellow griever is going through. Your experience has qualified you to bring the love of God into our broken, hurting world.

### CELEBRATE ETERNITY

Look beyond this moment of grief to an eternity with God. When you were brought into God's family, you started a journey that won't end until you are with your Lord in eternity. The heart-breaking pains of life in a fallen world will one day end. The crushing sadness of death will end. Someday your grief will be gone, and it won't return. So, as you grieve, remember what is to come and be thankful. You have a bright future that does not include sadness and death (Revelation 21:4).

### FINAL THOUGHTS

As you mourn the death of a loved one, remember you are not alone. Jesus endured death for you so that you could live with hope, strength, and courage even in the darkest moments of your life. Don't let grief rob you of life. Choose to live and experience the grace that Jesus died to give you. (John 11:25,26).

'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' (1 Corinthians 15:55). ■

✉ **Rev Ralph Hall,**  
*Kingston Free Presbyterian Church,*  
*Tasmania.*

# From the Principal's Desk



**A**s I write these lines, yet another College year is nearing its conclusion. Just a few classes remain, study leave beckons, and the inevitable end-of-term exams are on the horizon. Thankfully, this time around, we have had a more ‘normal’ session, with many of the constraints imposed by the Covid 19 Pandemic now relaxed. Zoom was (and continues to be) a useful tool, enabling us to keep going in those straitened circumstances, but we missed the interaction of in-person classes, and it was good to be back on site at the Jubilee Complex in September 2021. We are grateful to our ‘landlords’, the Martyrs Memorial congregation, for their support, and to Mr Peter Lunn, Caretaker, for his assistance in so many practical ways.

It was a joy to see last year’s ‘leavers’, Simon Anderson, Stephen Nelson and Jonathan Wilson, receive calls to congregations within weeks of their graduation. We wish them well in their new spheres of service. This year, we have two new students. Elizabeth Edwards and Andrew Irwin, both from the Lisburn congregation, have settled well and are welcome additions to the College community. Deepanker Nandy continues to join numerous classes remotely, from his home in India. Stephen Crawford (Magherafelt) and Jonathan Storey (Ballymoney) are now drawing to the close of the four-year ministerial course, and we pray

for success in final examinations and doors to open for both. Meanwhile, a range of outreach opportunities, home and abroad, will be pursued by our students during the summer vacation, not to mention many engagements in Churches here in N. Ireland. Looking ahead, subject to satisfactory interviews, we anticipate an increase in numbers for the next College year.

The Presbytery has granted full approval to the College Management Committee to proceed with plans for new, purpose-built premises on the site gifted by the Tandragee congregation. The plans have been submitted to the relevant authorities, and we await their decision. We are trusting the Lord to overrule - please pray for the right outcome.

The work of the Whitefield College of the Bible could not continue without the time invested by so many throughout the year. The work of our College Administrator, Lecturers, Management & Academic Committee Members and Covenant Scheme agents and supporters may go largely unheralded, but I cannot overestimate its importance. And, of course, there are those who pray for us every day – what a vital role you have in maintaining this witness! To one and all, I express my heartfelt appreciation. May I encourage you to take this work upon your heart? By so doing, you are investing in the future of our Church and in the future of Gospel work. Nothing is so much needed in these testing times! ■

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

✉ **Below:** The College Principal with fourth-year Students, Stephen Crawford & Jonathan Storey



# On the ground in Uganda

Rev Maurice Baxter and his wife Chrismar spent seven weeks at Emmanuel, Uganda, from the end of March until the start of May. Rev Baxter supplied the pulpit and both Rev & Mrs Baxter spoke at the School assemblies. Mr Baxter also helped with the maintenance of the School Campus. Please pray for the ministry of God's Word at Emmanuel and that the Lord will send a man to take to lead the Emmanuel Church.

The Mission Board seeks to give practical help each year to the ten families connected with the Emmanuel School who are in greatest need. The is done through the Orphan and Vulnerable Children farming project



which provides seed, fertiliser and training to these local people to help them provide for their families.

An Apprenticeship Programme was recently commenced to assist a small number of hard working pupils each year at the Emmanuel School, to learn a trade. Shalif, Innis & John are doing the Nursing Course at the Lyantonde School of Nursing & Midwifery.

Other pupils currently being helped are learning Mechanics and Needlework. One young man is also being helped to do his 'A' levels. Sincere thanks to the Londonderry & Magherafelt Churches for sponsoring some of these young people in the Apprenticeship Course. We ask you to pray that they will all know the Lord's help as they learn the various trades and continue their studies. ■

 **Below:**

Pictured with the Emmanuel School Social Worker, Mr Augustine, are the ten families being helped through this project in 2022.



# MISSION VISION

## CONFERENCE REPORT

*'These were not only meetings, they were meetings with God.'*

This is how one person described the *Mission Vision* Conference in May 2022. Following the various lockdowns and restrictions due to the Covid pandemic, the Mission Board of Presbytery, believed it was important to organise a conference to give fresh focus to the Great Commission. A small sub-committee was formed and plans were laid to centre the week around the preaching of God's word. In addition to carefully chosen subjects, missionaries (who either serve at home,

or who were at home on furlough) were invited to participate. It was agreed to prepare short videos, outlining how the Mission Board operates on different mission fields and various informal seminars were planned for the final Saturday. The session and committee of our Lisburn congregation kindly agreed to place their church facilities at our disposal, and Mission Vision was arranged to run from 7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

It was a blessed week of encouragement, challenge, instruction and fellowship. Each evening, specific missionary prayer requests were presented to the large congregation, a brief missionary video was shown and the Word of

God preached faithfully. It was fitting that Mission Board chairman, Rev Ian Harris, preached at the opening meeting on the theme of consecration in God's service. In successive meetings, attention was drawn to, the biblical charter for missionary work; the importance of the continual infilling of the Holy Spirit for missionary work; the importance of church planting on the mission field; the role of the home church in missionary work; reaching out and over cultural and national borders with the gospel; Christ's charter of success and, how do I know I am called to missionary work? It was evident, from the outset, that in spite of the interruptions due to Covid, there remains a strong interest in missionary work across our denomination. It was particularly encouraging to see young people in the services throughout the week and, a large number of youth fellowships in attendance on Friday evening.

On the final Saturday, a series of seminars were held, featuring home and foreign missionaries, and several members of various mission teams who have worked in foreign lands. Following a question and answer format, the importance of helping missionaries was stressed and details were given of upcoming mission trip opportunities. The Moderator, Rev John Armstrong and Whitefield College of the Bible Principal, Rev Timothy Nelson,

 **Below:** Members of the Free Presbyterian Church Mission Board



## MISSIONARY VISION



📷 **Above:** Missionaries who attended *Mission Vision*

also participated and outlined the importance of missionary work in the life of our denomination and the role of the College in preparing students for missionary work. A BBQ lunch provided by the Lisburn congregation was much appreciated.

Before the Thursday evening service, missionaries, Mission Board members, and other guests, met for dinner. It was a joy to have two Kenyan Pastors, Andrew Cheptoo and Patrice Akali, with us and the fellowship with these brethren and others was a great blessing.

At the close of each service, the congregation was invited to join the

missionaries in the Douglas Suite. Light refreshments were provided and each mission field was represented. It was encouraging to witness numerous conversations taking place with retired and active missionaries.

The Mission Vision week passed quickly, but our missionary work continues. The Mission Board is thankful for those whom the Lord has raised up and who are serving in various ways in various places. However, the need is great. Labourers are few and there remains many open doors of opportunity. We continue to pray that God would continue to guide those who feel burdened for the mission field and raise up more who will go with the glorious news of the gospel. As we reflect on Mission Vision, we do so with gratitude to God; gratitude for making it possible for so many of our missionaries to be present; for the preaching of His Word; for the fellowship that was enjoyed; for the young people who were challenged about Christian service; and for the encouragement experienced by those exercised about future missionary service. As noted, 'these were not just meetings, these were meetings with God.' ■



📷 **Right:** Workshop held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>

*The Mission Board would like to **express thanks** to the Minister, Session and Committee of Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church for hosting Mission Vision 2022*

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# Lough Erne

## FUNDAMENTALIST CONVENTION

SATURDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> JULY  
- LORD'S DAY 7<sup>TH</sup>  
AUGUST 2022

EACH  
NIGHT: **8PM**

LORD'S DAY:  
**12 NOON & 8PM**

**BETHEL FREE  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**

CHANTERHILL,  
ENNISKILLEN,  
BT74 4EG



**Dr J. Douglas**  
LISBURN



**Rev I. Goligher**  
CANADA



**Rev J. Armstrong**  
MODERATOR



**CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF THE CONVENTION &  
50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF BETHEL FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**