

# THE CORNERSTONE

*"Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone...."*

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF BALLYMENA FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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## A Word from our Minister

When the summer weeks approach, our minds turn toward the welcome time of relaxation during which rest for body and soul may be enjoyed. And that is good, for the Lord Himself counselled His disciples to come "... apart and rest awhile." I trust that all who will be able to get away for a break from the regular routine of life will be richly refreshed. But at the same time, please do not forget the Lord. It is a fact that, in the time of vacation, there is the danger of fellowship with the Lord being neglected. Make sure that you do not return from your holiday with your heart cold and backslidden. Stay close to Christ.

Remember too, the Lord's work in the weeks ahead, for it of necessity

continues, affording rich opportunity to serve Christ over the coming months. Very soon our annual Bible Conference will commence. You have known about it for quite some time, and I trust that your plans to give it full support are all in place. I am delighted that Dr. Alan Cairns is free to preach once more at this yearly event. His ministry was richly blessed of God in the formative years of the Conference, and we believe that his preaching will be used again among us as he returns this year. Please pray for God's servant and work hard to bring others along to the meetings that they might benefit from faithful preaching.

Then, with a break of one week, on Monday June 23<sup>rd</sup> the International Congress will be convened in the Martyrs Memorial Church. I would encourage you to make plans to attend as many of these meetings as possible; and pray much for the presence and blessing of God.

Brochures for the Congress are still available, showing all of the details.

Again, this summer we will be holding three

Children's Bible Clubs, the Lord willing – in Ballykeel, Ballee and the North Centre.

These are vital opportunities to reach into the wider community, and much help is needed. In the evenings, as before, we intend to have evangelistic preaching meetings. All of these events will be brought before you as the weeks go by in terms of announcement. But purpose before God to give all the support you can and to pray earnestly for the Lord's visitation.



## Reflections on a Youth Weekend

### Mary Donnelly

A weekend away with friends is always exciting, but particularly when it is the first of such weekends as a born-again Christian! Having only recently been saved and become a part of the youth at Ballymena, I was looking forward to the annual Youth Weekend with great anticipation, and it certainly didn't disappoint!

We left the church on Friday evening and made the journey down to Mullartown House in Annalong. Supper time came, along with room assignments and finally our evening meeting. The theme of the meetings for the weekend was

'God with us', and we greatly enjoyed the lessons Rev Greer had to share with us on key Bible characters such as David and Gideon. Group devotions took place each night, something I particularly enjoyed!

On Saturday, we all headed off to Greenhill Centre in the Mourne for our chosen activities - archery, zip lining, canoeing, high and low ropes or bouldering. Canoeing proved to be an excellent choice, the weather stayed fabulous, and thankfully our large and not so flattering blue wet suits kept us from getting too wet! We went back to Mullartown for tea and another meeting, and then, later that night, enjoyed great fun and fellowship as we gathered around the campfire singing choruses and, of course, making s'mores!

On Sunday morning, we travelled to Annalong where we attended church. After church and a delicious Sunday lunch, we packed up the final odds and ends and began the long journey home, our final stop being the evening service at Martyrs Memorial. It was a brilliant weekend where friendships were made, leaders were soaked, valuable lessons were learned, and some of us learned to truly appreciate our sleep!



# Youth Weekend



## Sunday School Exam

Each year, our senior Sunday school children are examined on the work they have done over the previous year. The exam is made up of two parts, firstly the Shorter Catechism exam, when four questions are asked



from those that have been learned.

Secondly, an oral exam is carried out on the stories covered, (this year Creation and the Fall). The children are questioned by a minister and this can prove a daunting experience, but we are thankful for the children's willingness

and excellent standard of learning each year.



## Dr. Alan Cairns



### Tell us a little of your early life and conversion?

I was born in Belfast to Christian parents and heard the gospel from my earliest days. My parents were involved in the work of a local mission hall, but I followed my two older brothers into the Salvation Army. There, under the ministry of a team of American evangelists, I received Christ as my Saviour. We moved house soon after that; and, when the Free Church planted a congregation in Mt. Merriem Avenue, Belfast, my mother brought my younger brother and me along to the services. That became my spiritual home and the place where I first became engaged in Christian service. During teenage years, I was plagued with many doubts, but in a memorable late night prayer meeting the Lord settled them and gave me assurance. I had the privilege of sitting under the ministry of Rev. S. B. Cooke, and it was as he preached that the Lord called me into the work of the Free Presbyterian ministry.

### What is your favourite Bible verse?

That is difficult to say, because different passages have been used by the Lord at different stages in my life. John 6:37 is precious as the text He used to lead me to complete assurance. Psalm 90:16, 17 were used to call me into the ministry. Psalm 65:11 was a promise the Lord sealed to my heart at a particularly difficult time and that He fulfilled in letting me experience a very fruitful time of soul-winning. So

it's hard to pick out one verse or passage, though I must say that the prayers of Paul in Ephesians 1:15–23 and 3:14–21 have lived constantly in my heart and mind for many years.

### What is your favourite hymn?

Again, there are so many. For years in Greenville I had the joy of having a wonderful singing congregation. *Great God of Wonders, O, for a Thousand Tongues, All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*, and *Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven* all bring back many thrilling memories. And then there is *Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness*, a truly wonderful hymn.

### What do you see as the greatest challenge for the church in the 21st century?

The challenge to the church has always been the same, to "know Christ and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." To be in the world, but not of it; to deny self and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit; to be faithful to Christ and to live in the fulness of His Spirit—this is our calling, from which the world, the flesh, and the devil will do all they can to distract us. People think our challenge is to make the gospel "relevant" to this generation. Not at all. Salvation is a supernatural work of God. What we need is to know God and the power of His Spirit and He will make His word effective.

### What is your vision for the future of the church?

I pray that the Free Church will cherish our unity in the faith once delivered to the saints, that it will stand fast in Biblical separation without descending into needless divisiveness, and that it will again know the power of prayer to prevail with God and the power of His Spirit to prevail with men through the preaching of the gospel.

# Summer Outreach

## Kathryn McClintock

At the recent Children's Worker's Seminar held in our Church Complex, we were reminded of the value and importance of child evangelism. Miss Joyce Walsh, Mr Robert McConnell, and Mr Chris Killen gave beneficial advice on the many aspects of Children's work. All in attendance will testify to gaining a renewed zeal and passion for reaching the lost souls of our children.

This year we have a number of outreach efforts planned for the summer months. The Ballymena Show was held on 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> May. We took a marquee and had it set up with craft activities for the children. While the children were colouring, we had the opportunity to speak to the parents

about our meeting and present the Gospel. We distributed bags containing a colour poster with a text, bookmarks, a children's tract, a colouring book based on the parable of the lost sheep, and a specially produced DVD showing what goes on in our Friday Night meeting. The DVD shows scenes from a typical meeting, an invitation to the meetings, and a Bible Lesson. We pray that this tool will not only make parents aware of our meetings but that the message on it will be used to speak to souls.

As a new venture this year, we will also be taking a marquee to the Highland Games in Glenarm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July. The event organisers were very willing to allow us to attend this event.

As well as our outreach ministry, we will also be holding Holiday Bible Clubs. These are planned for Ballykeel with Mr Chris Killen and Ballee with Mr Mark

Telford. We have also planned a Bible Club again in the North Centre to be taken by Mr Chris Killen. We hope to build on the success of last year's Bible Club. when we gained many new contacts. As a result of contacts made, we now send a bus to the top of the town on a Friday Night. In addition to these Bible Clubs, Gospel missions will be held in an effort to further reach these areas.

Please pray for Philip McClintock as he leads the children's work, and for all those who faithfully give of their time in this vital work. Pray that not only the children who attend the Bible Clubs will be spoken to, but that their parents will be compelled to attend the missions. God is faithful, and He has said *"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it"* Isaiah 55v11.

## Sunday School BBQ



The group from Ballymena who travelled to Tralee on the Consider Christ Outreach

# Saved By Grace

## Testimony of James McAllister

When I look back at the early part of my life, I can remember some very happy times, but also some very sad. The saddest time of all was when I was just 15 years of age and my mother died; this was a huge blow to me. It was at that time that I started to taste of the things of this world, particularly alcohol.

I was married at the young age of eighteen, and my wife Dorothy and I had children; but I must confess that I wasn't a very good husband or father. My main interests were attending football matches and playing in a flute band. Sadly, they gave me further opportunities to indulge in more alcohol.

In 1984, I started to have pain in my back and went to the doctor. He arranged for me to have an X ray which revealed I had an infection in my liver. The doctor informed me that it was one of two things causing an infection - either jaundice or the alcohol I had been drinking. He advised me to stay off alcohol for six

months to see if there would be any improvement; and although I wondered how I would get through Christmas, I decided to give it a go.

It was during October 1984 that I started to come under conviction of sin and started to think about the things of God and eternal matters. I didn't know at the time what was happening to me; it was only later that I realised that it was the work of the Holy Spirit in my soul. During this period, I asked my sister Sylvia, who was a saved girl, if she knew of anywhere I could go to hear the Word of God. She showed me from our local newspaper church notices that there was a week of meetings in Coleraine Free Presbyterian Church, and a converted



Roman Catholic priest was giving his testimony on the Monday night.

I decided to go and hear him, and he told of how he had been converted to Christ and had been persecuted because he had left the priesthood and the church. It was one remark he

made which really struck me; he said that he didn't need to be saved merely because he was a Roman Catholic or a priest, but he needed to be saved because he was a sinner of Adam's fallen race. He went on to say that professing Protestants, outside of Christ, were also sinners who needed to be saved just like everyone else, quoting Romans 3 v 23 *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."* He stressed that the sinner must come to Christ alone for salvation.

It was a few days after this, on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1984, that I came to an end of myself; and, in my own bedroom, I got down on my knees as a guilty Hell deserving sinner and called upon the name of the Lord. I thanked Him for paying the great price for my sin; and then, repenting of my sins, I received and rested upon Him as my own and personal Saviour. I received the promise from scripture: *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"* (Rom 10 v 13).

I thank God for all His grace and help over the years attending Coleraine F.P.C. , during my studies in the Whitefield College of the Bible, working under the Mission Board, and, in recent years, serving Him in Ballymena F.P.C.

## Financial Update

	Average Weekly Offering	Home & Foreign Missions	Building & Repair Fund	UK Fund	Special Offerings	
<b>Apr</b>	£ 4808.00	£ 1534.00	£ 857.00	£ 125.90	Jonathan Smith Joanne Greer Kenya Books	£ 1104.75 £ 50.00 £ 20.00
<b>May</b>	£ 4937.00	£ 1292.50	£ 804.00	£ 197.75	Rev W Irwin Brian Lorimer Mission Boxes	£ 1128.20 £ 100.00 £ 55.80



## Internet Ministry

	Audio Downloads	Video Downloads	Webcast Viewers
<b>Apr</b>	4129	1050	2177
<b>May</b>	3508	1038	2060

## Points for Prayer

Some of our young people will be carrying out mission and outreach works over the summer.

**Papua New Guinea - New Tribes Mission - June**  
Glenn Hamilton

**Edinburgh - Commonwealth Games Outreach - July**  
Emma Stirling, Stephen Greer, Jerusha Greer, Emma Wilkinson

**Newcastle - Youth Council Camp Leader - August**  
Rachel Houston

**Brazil - New Tribes Mission - August**  
Kyle Hamilton

**Canada - Hope for Youth Ministries -**  
Paul and Cheryl McIntyre

## Dates for your Diary

- Annual Bible Conference : 7th-13th June
- International Congress : 23rd-27th June
- Children's Day : 29th June
- Ballykeel Bible Club : 30th June - 4th July
- Outreach at Glenarm Highland Games: 14th July
- Children's Mission in North Centre : 4th - 8th August
- Ballee Bible Club : 18th - 22nd August