

First Dromara
Presbyterian Church

The Link

Autumn 2023



Dear Friends,

A few weeks ago, I shared with you all that during my recent sabbatical to Senegal, I bought a large wooden dish. When walking through the West African markets, many traders look for a hook to get you to enter their shop, and once you are in, it's a tough job retreating without buying something, or at least feeling bad about not buying something. One particular trader lured me into his shop- he convinced me that my life would not be complete without purchasing the large dish (which, as other members of the group informed me as I emerged from the shop, was akin to a small boat!) I knew it would be a great to-do getting this dish home, but I managed. However, the trader was so captivated by his product, he made me feel like I couldn't live my life without it. Good salespeople love their product and make you feel like you cannot live your life without what they have. The most effective witnesses are the people who have been captivated by Jesus and want others to know they cannot live without Him. Psalm 96 is a great missionary Psalm, and to it we turn now as we set the scene for our magazine, telling the nations, near and far!

In many ways, this Psalm tells us to do exactly what Charles Wesley (1707-1788) wrote. He, one of the most prolific hymn writers of all time, crafted more than 8,900 hymns and poems. Although *"Ye Servants of God"* may seem like a standard hymn of praise to God, there is a deeper theology within it, which Wesley works into all his writing. This hymn was first published in 1744 in *"Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution"* and opened the section of *"Hymns to Be Sung in a Tumult."*

*"Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad His wonderful Name;
the Name all-victorious of Jesus extol:
His kingdom is glorious; He rules over all."*

Telling the nations, near and far- God's Glory (Ps 96:1-3)

"Oh sing to the LORD a new song;

sing to the LORD, all the earth!

Sing to the LORD, bless his name;

tell of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations,

his marvellous works among all the peoples!"

You will see, as we are introduced to this Psalm, that in 2 verses we read the word sing three times. We are to be a singing and rejoicing people. The reality is, you can't summon people if you're not singing. The Psalmist says, *"all the earth!"* That's us, you and me! We shouldn't say, "I'm too old to sing as my voice is cracked" or "I'm too young to sing as my voice isn't mature or developed enough." All the earth is to sing praise to God, even hurt and broken people. Ligon Duncan, an author says, *"Praising God in the midst of pain is one of the most profound testimonies that a believer or a congregation can ever give to the Lord."* You can't summon if you're not singing because witness overflows from worship.

R.C. Sproul, a bible teacher and preacher said, *"The real crisis of worship today is not that the preaching is paltry or that it's too drafty in church. It is that people have no sense of the presence of God, and if they have no sense of His presence, how can they be moved to express the deepest feelings of their souls to honour, revere, worship, witness and glorify God?"*

If you are captivated by something or someone, you will tell others! It is the same with the Majesty of God. You will want others to see and know Him. You will want to support local and global mission, by:

- Praying - as we have been doing through the Blaze video on Sunday mornings and at the special evening of prayer for all the people heading off.
- Giving - as many of you did when you came to the Exodus coffee morning in our church and via the missionary envelopes and account every week.
- Going - as this magazine will show many people who have headed off in recent weeks.
- Perhaps you would like to be involved more? Would you like to join or be part of the Missionary Committee here in our own church? The Lord might even be calling you to go somewhere now?

He calls every believer to be a Missionary where they are, because as we look around, we realise, we meet people from across the world everyday for the nations have come to us. We need to tell them about God's Glory!

Notice, it starts in the church. The context of this Psalm is worship. We need to be filled with worship and captivated by God's Glory. Are you? Are we? When was the last time you were stunned by the glory of God? When was the last time you were lost in the wonder of your own salvation? How often, as you have considered God's glory, has it left you speechless? The Lord is altogether glorious, and yet, we constantly, perpetually offend Him. We are unlovable and unlovely, yet He loves us. He doesn't need to, but He chooses to. Do we believe this? If not, then how can we expect others to when we tell them? The Gospel is Good News according to Mark 1:1, yet, in our recounting and retelling we often render it just news. Our witness is the overflow of worship. Both are intricately and intrinsically linked. This summer, many of us told the nations, far and near, of God's Glory. You will see it as you read on. Keep doing it! Wesley's hymn continues, and helps with this point; *"God ruleth on high, almighty to save;
and still He is nigh: His presence we have.
The great congregation His triumph shall sing,
ascribing salvation to Jesus our King."*

Telling the nations, near and far- God's Character (Ps 96:4-9)

*"For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be feared above all gods.*

*For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.*

*Splendour and majesty are before him;
 strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
 ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!
 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
 bring an offering and come into his courts!
 Worship the LORD in the splendour of holiness;
 tremble before him, all the earth!"*

The Psalmist is so delighted by God, he can't stop or help but tell others about Him. He calls believers today to do the same. What aspects of God's character do we see the Psalmist sharing-

- God is Above all (vv4-5) The Psalmist smashes the idols that surround Israel. He declares the Lord is to be feared. In 2023, it's not just pagans who have idols. In Northern Ireland we might not see people run to the shrines of Hindu deities like those who have travelled to India or Indonesia this summer. We might not see people openly prostrate and venerate themselves before their ancestral groves like those who travelled to West Africa, but idolatry exists in our community, and it exists in our church. We have idols. What drives your life? It could be work, family, security, money or a lack of work, family, security, or money. What do you think about most? What makes you happy? What occupies your thoughts? Is it Jesus? Our God is above all! Do we express this? Does He come first in your life? Do we show this? Hudson Taylor (who we did a children's address series about) knew something of the idols of China, and he knew a lot about telling the nations, far and near, God's character. He ascribes, "*Christ is Lord of all, or not Lord at all.*"
- God is Glorious (vv6-9) The Psalmist lists wonderful adjectives, splendour, majesty, strength, and beauty. It's almost like they all take a bow before God because He owns and displays them all, perfectly. The Psalmist implores us to give God glory. Indeed, the Psalmist is basically asking, have you forgotten how glorious Jesus is? He's a great King and He's coming back. He's glorious, seated at God's right hand. Have you forgotten that because of this, we should tremble before Him? We should stand in silence and awe before such a God. Is this the God we show to the nations?



- God Rules (vv10) We will look at verse 10 in the last point, but we dip into the first few words just now. This is an essential part of God's character. He rules. He rules over history, He rules over this broken world. In modern hymnals, 2 verses of Wesley's hymn have been omitted, but even these 'stalwarts' knew what it was to cling to a ruling God in a broken world. Charles experienced harrowing storms on his American voyage in 1735, so he was familiar with the trouble of being tossed around on the roaring waves of the sea. He, and his brother, also suffered grave persecutions in the 1740s. Among the worst were accusations of treason against the king. They were assaulted by a law officer and mob while preaching in Sheffield in 1743. The hymn says,

*"The waves of the sea have lift up their voice,
 Sore troubled that we in Jesus rejoice;
 The floods they are roaring, but Jesus is here,
 While we are adoring, He always is near.*

*Men, Devils engage, the billows arise,
 And horribly rage, and threaten the skies:
 Their fury shall never our steadfastness shock
 The weakest believer is built on a rock."*

In the storms, are we confident, like Charles Wesley and the Psalmist, that God rules?

Many of the folk in this magazine who were involved in telling the nations, far and near this summer, will have experienced some who did not care for their captivating message. Some of you reading this do so under the dark cloud of foreboding- only you know your own situation and circumstance. Yet, we can say, our God reigns! Luke records in Acts 2:23, *"Jesus, delivered up according to the plan and foreknowledge of God, crucified and killed by lawless men"* looked like the greatest disaster in history, yet it was according to God's ruling plan He worked the death of His own Son, for our good. Even today, in Ukraine, in Latvia, in Hungary, in Ireland, in Dromara and Kinallen, our God rules. Wesley/we can sing,

*"Salvation to God who sits on the throne!
Let all cry aloud and honour the Son.
The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces, and worship the Lamb."*

Telling the nations, near and far- God's Judgement (Ps 96:10-)

*"Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns!
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it!
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy
before the LORD, for he comes,
for he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness,
and the peoples in his faithfulness."*

The last point ended with us singing for joy because God reigns. That's the God we worship. Yet, the last section of this Psalm gives us a third reason to sing praise and tell the nations; Jesus is coming again. John's vision in Revelation 3:11 says, *"I am coming soon."* That's Jesus addressing the church.

When I grew up at home, my brother and I would be sent to bed at the same time, but we slept in separate rooms. When the coast was clear, we would send a signal and either I would sneak into his room, or he into mine. We would mess around, but not sleep. The odd thump or bang on the floor would alert my parents below that mischievous matters were afoot. My brother and I could tell by the plod on the stairs if it were mum or dad who was ascending, not only could we tell they were coming, not only could we tell who was

coming, but we knew depending on who it was the severity of the punishment if caught and our reaction was probably different depending on who we knew was coming. I will leave you to work out who was the strictest in exercising punishment.

Why is Christ coming? We are told, *"to judge the earth."* He will bring justice judgement and everyone to account. Justice will be brought to the world. Every unforgotten murder by the Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitaries during the 'Northern Ireland Troubles.' There are many in our own country crying out for justice. Jesus is coming to carry out perfect and complete justice. We are to tell this to the nations, far and near.

The writer propels us into the future, for He says, be glad and look forward to that day. When you hear Jesus is coming again, is this your response? Are you glad and filled with joy that He's coming back? Or are you filled with fear and dread? Does this reality send you racing for the right or wrong reasons? Perhaps you know, that when God plays the DVD of your life over, it cannot pass His judgement. The idea of rejoicing in this last day is absent from your life. Christians should be glad, not because they are better than anybody else, but because when it comes to a Christian, instead of taking out the DVD of their life, God takes out the DVD of Christ's perfect life and plays it instead, because a great transaction has taken place. We're judged by that life. God has recorded over our past lives of sin because the just judgement was poured upon Jesus in our place. He took the judgement, so we don't have to endure it for all eternity. This, Christian, is why you can sing and be glad. The Psalm finishes by reminding us, when we're telling the nations, near and far, of God's judgement, that it will be better on the day of Jesus' return for the trees and the fields, than for the people that aren't trusting in Him. Another popular Christian author and speaker, Alistair Begg says, ***"As a result of grace, we have been saved from sin's penalty. One day we will be saved from sin's presence. In the meantime we are being saved from sin's power."*** Be glad and rejoice!

Enjoy reading about how our members this summer, have been telling the nations, near and far, God's Glory, Character, and Judgement- and remember, you can, daily, too! Wesley's final verse is a fitting end,

*"Then let us adore and give Him His right:
All glory and power, all wisdom and might,
all honour and blessing, with angels above,
and thanks never ceasing and infinite love."*

Enjoy this edition of 'The Link', and thanks to everyone who has contributed to it and the editorial team for all their hard work.

Blessings, Scott.

Congregational Record

New Communicants

“Do this in remembrance of me.” Luke 22:19

**Mrs Julie Harron
Mr Kyle Harron
Mrs Sarah Megarry
Miss Sarah Wilson**

Deaths

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21:4

Mrs Jean Crawford - 27th May 2023

Mr David Ervin - 29th August 2023

Mr David Thomas (Tommy) Johnston - 17th September 2023



Dr Jordan McCullough graduated with a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in French from Queen's University, Belfast on 3rd July 2023



Dr Charlotte Hawthorne who has graduated in Medicine from the University of Leicester with a MBChB BSc (Hons)

Introducing - Tobias and Julie Haslund-Thomsen in Denmark

As a congregation, through the Missionary Committee, we are supporting the work of European Mission Fellowship (EMF). We have had Phil Dunn on many occasions, who has passionately shared with us the Gospel needs throughout Europe. EMF have launched a new scheme that allows for congregations and leaders to get to know a particular part of Europe better. A few months ago, we watched a video in church, introducing us to a family and congregation in Denmark, who we will be partnering with for the future. Below you can read a little bit more about Tobias and his congregation. As a church, we will be partnering with Tobias in several ways, not just financially sending financial help, but also by receiving videos and prayerful updates, some Danish visitors coming over here and perhaps helping us in our witness and evangelism and perhaps some of you going to Denmark to do the same there. Partnership in the Gospel is something the bible speaks warmly about often. Tobias is 31 years old and from Aalborg in the northern part of Denmark. He is married to Julie, who is a midwife, and together they have a son called Samuel.

Tobias grew up in a Christian family in a very charismatic church. At the age of 12 he came to faith and as he pursued



**EUROPEAN
MISSION
FELLOWSHIP**

God and His Word in his teens, he was eventually led to a reformed theological conviction. In 2014 Tobias started studying medicine to become a doctor but was called to ministry. This resulted in him leaving medicine to pursue theological studies from 2015-2021 where he obtained his master's degree from Aarhus University.

Besides studying theology, he also underwent pastoral training in his local church, and the church eventually took him on as one of its pastors.

In the summer of 2021 Tobias moved from the church in Aalborg to Aarhus (the second largest city in Denmark) to take on a church plant called 'Haven Aarhus' where he is still serving as the pastor.

Besides pastoring a local church, Tobias is preaching and teaching throughout Denmark at local churches, bible schools, conferences etc. He is also a council member for The Gospel Coalition Nordic.

Denmark is an extremely secular country, and that tendency is even stronger in big cities like Aarhus. However, the need for the gospel and the potential for church planting is great as



well. Tobias wants to plant and establish a strong, healthy, and biblical local church in Aarhus.

Denmark comprises of the Jutland peninsula and numerous islands. It is linked to nearby Sweden via the Oresund bridge and has a border with Germany to the south. Copenhagen is the capital of Denmark.

The official religion of Denmark, as stated in the Danish Constitution, is the Lutheran Church of Denmark. Approximately 74% of the Danish population is Lutheran.

Despite the high membership figures only a small percent-

age regularly attend Sunday services. Like other Nordic countries Denmark is very secular in it's outlook. The evangelical church constitutes approximately 3.5% of the 5.9 million population.

Here are some prayer points to help you remember Tobias and the Aarhus congregation:

Please pray:

- For Tobias and his family.
- For the health and growth of the church in all areas.
- For the church to settle into their new building and use it for the glory of God.
- For the success of the gospel work in the city of Aarhus, particularly amongst the university students.



First Dromara- Arise

Holiday Bible Club

3rd - 8th July 2023



For many years, we have been grateful to David and Gillian Spiers who faithfully led this week of busyness and activity. As familiar faces were absent, we were also glad to see many returning and even new faces this year.

Our theme was 'Seaside Rock', where we were transported every night to the sand dunes, sea waves, buckets and spades, beach balls, wind breakers and rubber rings to learn about Jesus' friend and disciple, Peter. With approximately 110 registered, the place was filled every night with starfish and jellyfish (our two groups) when much fun and activity was had. Our verse for the week was, *"If we confess our sins to God, He can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away."* 1 John 1:9. How wonderful, for little children to hear and learn every night, that by looking to Jesus, just as Peter did, they can have their sins forgiven. Is this something you've been reminded of? Is this something you need to do?

Every night, the children heard a different story relating to Peter's life, but more importantly, each story pointed the boys and girls to the One who Peter trusted in, Jesus. Many of you will remember Barry's Big-Dipper, from Portrush beach holidays. As we went to the seaside every night, we also stepped onto the roller-coaster of Peter's life. He had some ups, and when he was up, he was well and truly up, being one of the best friend's of Jesus. When he was down, he swooped and swirled right to the bottom, especially when he denied Jesus. Let's hop onto the roller coaster now and look at the stories through spelling Peter's name-

P- Picked

Matthew 4:19- *"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."*

We are introduced to Peter as the Fisherman who struggled all night on the Sea of Galilee to catch some fish. Unfortunately, he returned deflated

and empty handed. He encountered Jesus on the seashore who not only told him to cast his net on the other side where he caught an abundance of fish, but his life changed, as Peter was called to be a disciple. We hope the boys and girls considered how Jesus might have been speaking to them to, "follow!"

E-Educated

Matthew 7:24- *"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock."*

The boys and girls heard a story that Peter heard, taught by Jesus as he looked out over the seashore. The parable of the wise and foolish builder is one that would have resonated deeply with every person who heard it in 1st century Palestine. The children listened to stories being told as beautiful structures toppled in the winds and storms that were not built on the Strong Foundation. Reminding us of our own lives and the importance of building our lives on the only foundation that matters, the only foundation that can cope with the storms of life, Jesus!

T- Transformed

Mark 1:31- *"Jesus came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her."*

Through the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, and others, we hear how Jesus is powerful. This truth transforms Peter as he sees who Jesus really is. Jesus really does have power over the storm, He really does have power over illness and disease and He really does have power over everything. Maybe you need to realise this power yourself? Like Peter, let it transform you into an obedient, relying disciple.

E- Extinguished

John 18:25- *"You also are not one of his disciples,*



are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." Just like the Big-Dipper in the old Barry's at Portrush, Peter's life takes a downwards spiral. He affirms he would never let Jesus down. However, on the night of Jesus' arrest, he is asked three times if he knew Jesus. Three times Peter says, "I do not" to the question, "Do you know Jesus?" Every time we sin we do the same. Not one of us can say we have not sunken to the same depths as Peter did. Yet, the story doesn't end there, thankfully...

R- Restored

John 21:17- *"Do you love me?"*

Peter denies Jesus three times, but Jesus asks Peter three times this question, "do you love me?" Each time he says yes, but he gets more and more frustrated with Jesus for badgering him with the same question. Jesus asks him it three times to remind him that it was three times he denied Jesus. Jesus forgives him for each time, and for everything else, too. Peter is lovingly restored. Peter is lovingly redeemed. Peter is lovingly reaffirmed. Just like us, when the roller-coaster hits rock bottom, we look up, and we see Jesus standing there willing to receive us as we soar upwards again towards Him. Peter points us to Jesus, the boys and girls saw that. Do you?

The children (3-10) enjoyed wreath making, painting stained glass windows, making jellyfish, eating ice cream, playing drums with Releasing Rhythms, playing games, hearing stories, doing action songs and much, much more.

The young people (11-16) enjoyed a full programme during the day on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Their bible talks were also centred on the life of Peter, looking at his call, denial and restoration. Their activities ranged from fire lighting, axe throwing, backwoods cooking and forest games in the Scout forest park outside Lisburn, paddle boarding and water assault courses at Let's Go Hydro and beach activities and games at Murlough. The young people were fed, not just spiritually, but physically as members of our church prepared meals.

With approximately 150 young people in attendance throughout the week, we thank every leader who committed to being here for the week, we thank every child for coming along and enjoying the programme, we thank every parent who brought their children to the club and most importantly, we thank God. Our prayers were answered in so many ways. Thank you, everyone!





Dundalk Holiday Bible Club 2023

Every year, so many people are involved with our Arise Holiday Bible Club week, which is great.

Scenery is painted, crafts are assembled, games are prepared and a theme is selected from which stories from God's Word are taught. However, with so much work and effort, it's always a bit of a shame to not reuse some of it again.

This year, a team of nine travelled every day during the first week of August to Dundalk Presbyterian Church, Co. Louth to use afresh our resources.

Our theme, as you read earlier on in this magazine, was the same as our own week, Seaside Rock. Every day, we drove to Dundalk. It's hard to believe that this mission field is so close to our own doorstep. Dundalk has around 40,000 people living in it - when you think of the number of PCI

congregations that cover Dromara, Dromore, Rathfriland, Castlewellan and the surrounding area, and Dundalk has just one. Statistically, Northern Ireland is one of the most evangelised nations in Europe and the Republic of Ireland is one of the least. Prof Edward Donnelly states, "this raises great questions for us regarding our view of mission." We are part of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, it is natural for us to want to be involved in fulfilling the great commission down the road as much as across the world.

Every day, we ran a Holiday Bible Club and told the boys and girls the same stories as we used here, we assembled the same crafts and played many of the same games and every day members of the congregation fed us before we made the trek back home again. Each of us who were involved in the week were glad to be involved in this expression of gospel

partnership, and we know the congregation enjoyed our participation, too. Around 35 children were registered, and we hope this is something we can build upon on future years.

We are glad to be able to partner with Dundalk Presbyterian Church, and we hope that it will mean not just Holiday Bible Club involvement, but other times of partnership during the year. We are delighted that the Minister, Rev Jonathan Porter, joined us for Harvest, we also hope that at some stage our young adult's groups will be able to meet up and our praise group have been down and played once. Philippians 1 reminds us that the Apostle thanks God for "partnership in the gospel." So do we! We would love to take a slightly bigger team down next year. This year we even had three join us who were under the age of five. If you have kids, you can bring them along.





Tollymore set up was Thursday 6th July - first camp starting Friday 7th at 7pm.

After a late night of packing trailers and vans we had an early start (7am) to make our way to the field. At first the weather was good. We unloaded the trailer and got most of the first big marquee up and some army tents but then the rain came, and it came heavy along with the wind, but this didn't stop us. We carried on—we weren't giving up.

Unfortunately, we weren't able to get two out of 20 army tents up, as it was nearly impossible with the weather. The second marquee was put up without walls, but we had a roof so we could make a start on the inside. When the weather calmed down we finished the tents and marquee.

The first camp started on 7th July and the last camp ended on the 28th. Throughout this there were two family camps, one youth camp and three children's camp. In total 31 children that we know of trusted in Christ for salvation.

The camps were very fun-filled and very busy few weeks. We had lots of games such as football, volleyball, rounders, hockey and more. Each week we also had a few social/party games with the children which they absolutely loved. There were two meetings a day, one in the morning and another in the evening. Lots of leaders take part in these meetings telling the children things like their favourite bible verse, memory verse, sharing an object lesson and much more.

This was the wettest Tollymore Camp on record, but it didn't dampen children's spirits or the Holy Spirit working in

the lives of the children.

'Can I come back next year?' was heard from many at pick up time.

Anya Harper





Ambassadors Football Camp

This July (17-20th) was the third year of the Ambassadors football camp at Fairhill Primary School in Kinallen.

As always, this camp aims to reach boys and girls with the good news of Jesus through football.

From Monday to Wednesday, all the children participated in the various training drills to develop their dribbling, passing and shooting.

Each night there would be time for a few short matches where they would put their skills into practice.

On the final night (Thursday), it was time when all the children would compete to lift the world cup trophy.

Although the fun, friendship and football are all important, the gospel message each night was the most important part of the night. Over the four nights, four different leaders shared football related, gospel centred talks and how having a personal relationship with Jesus is the only way to escape our punishment of sin which is a lost eternity in hell. During the week the boys and girls learned this verse in the book of John, which talks about

how only Jesus can get us to the Father in heaven. John 14:6 says, "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

God richly blessed the football camp this year, as the weather stayed dry, there were no major injuries and most importantly, seeds were planted in young people's hearts.

Please pray for all the children at the camp over the past three years, that they will put their trust in Jesus as their own and personal saviour.

Thank you to everyone who gave up their time to help at the camp. Time spent reaching boys and girls for the Lord is time well spent.

"So My word that proceeds from My mouth will not return to Me empty, but it will accomplish what I please, and it will prosper where I send it. " Isaiah 55:11

God bless,
Matthew Reain









Above and below - Leaders in disguise for the 'hunt the leader' challenge.

Junior Camp—Jonathan Rodgers

Action-packed, relentless, thrilling, unforgettable. I'm not describing the new Mission Impossible movie (which was excellent) but CEF Junior Camp 2023 at Seaview, Kilkeel. 70 energetic children, 18 gifted leaders and a week of dry weather was a promising recipe for a great week, and it didn't disappoint.

We met on the Sunday afternoon to unpack, set up, catch up and to brace for the hectic six days to come. We were really pleased to welcome many familiar faces back to camp for a second successive year, as well as to meet new children coming for the first time.

The children didn't take long to settle into the daily routine. Breakfast, dorm tidy, the morning meeting, quiet time, sport and craft, lunch, an afternoon and evening activity, dinner, evening meeting and bed time. The regularity of the program ensured that we made the most of each day, whilst the diverse range of activities proved to be a continual source of excitement and intrigue. Activities included inflatable



disco bouncy castles and obstacle courses, hunting leaders in disguise hiding around the town, team music video challenges, swimming, the pea fair, and not to forget, the iconic Junior Camp's Got Talent.

But undoubtedly, the highlight of Junior Camp was the Friday night. In addition to the bible lessons from the life of Joshua, throughout the week the boys and girls had the opportunity to hear leaders testifying to how God brought

them to know and love Jesus. But on Friday night it was the turn of the campers. Around 20 children shared about how they came to have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus, with a couple sharing that they did so at Junior Camp.

As you can imagine, our hearts were and continue to be full of praise to our God, the One who is pleased to use ordinary people like us, to point boys and girls to our extraordinary Saviour.

Derryneil Bible Club – The Copes Family

This year Brian and myself helped out in the summer bible club at Derryneil which ran from Monday, 31st July to Friday, 4th August.

The week started at 7.00am on the Saturday morning to get the marquee up followed by a delicious fry up and a prayer time - all done by 9.30am. A 'well oiled lock' by now - if that is a proper saying.

It was encouraging to see a good number of additional leaders and helpers both young and not so young, male and female coming along for the first time. Numbers were around 40-60 children per night.

The children and leaders had great fun with lively singing, story time, crafts, games, juice and biscuits and tea for leaders. The theme of the bible club was from Scripture Union, called 'Wonder Zone'.

Topics explored each day were as follows:

Monday—The fun of discovery, 1 kings 3:5-15 (Solomon asks for Wisdom).

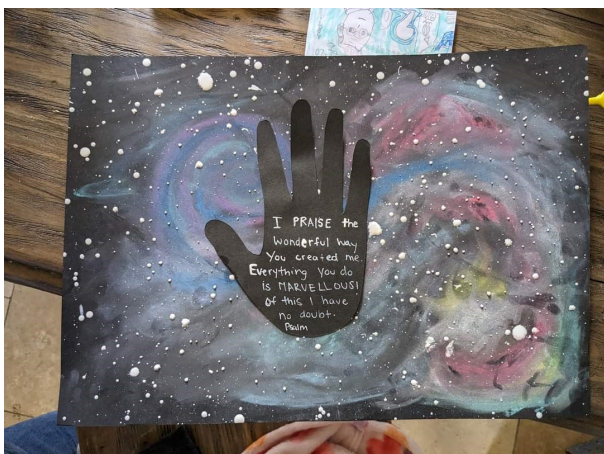
Tuesday—The wonders of the universe, Psalm 8 (amazed at Gods creation)

Wednesday—John 9:1-34, 8:12 (Jesus is the light of the world)

Thursday—The creatures of the world, Psalm 104: 139

Friday—The possibilities of robots (Choice, Prodigal Son's choices - Bad and Good), Luke 15: 11-32

CHALLENGE - Why not, over the period of a week, read each portion from the Bible and find out or reaffirm how amazing our God is, how He is in control of ALL things, how He loves us and wants the best for us.



On Friday night we were thinking of the possibilities of robots and how this may change our lives in the future.

We were thinking on the Parable of the Lost Son and we were demonstrated how by quite simply asking a question of Artificial Intelligence, A. I., the story could be told quite accurately in a matter of seconds. This may present challenges to schools,

colleges and universities in the future to ensure work is authentic. What AI didn't seem to be able to cover was the fact that we as human beings do have free will to make our own choices.

In the story the son made a bad choice and decided to leave home thinking life would be much better afar off. He found out that the pleasures of this world are only for a season and he soon lost everything he had.

Thankfully he then made a good choice and decided to return home where his father was waiting to welcome him back into the family.

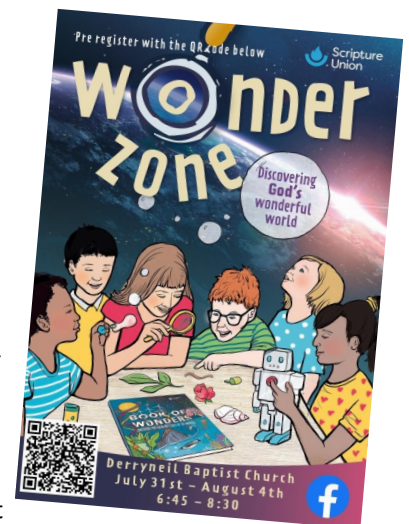
In the same way God loves us so much that He sent His one and only son, Jesus Christ, to die on a cruel cross so that if we by free will choose to repent of our sins and accept his offer of salvation He will welcome us as a child of God into His heavenly kingdom.

We pray that everyone will make this wise choice.

The memory verse we learned was from Psalm 139 verse 14 'I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well'.

Sunday saw the closing of the week's outreach with a full church for the afternoon service recapping all that had taken place and followed by a BBQ in the marquee.

We trust that God would bless the work at Derryneil and that the seeds of God's Word sown would yield fruit in His time.





Senegal Tour

By Joshua Reain



In the early hours of Friday, 9th June 2023, a 16-man squad set off on a playing/coaching tour to a country in west Africa called Senegal.

The main aim of this trip was to provide support to a missionary family, the Cuthberts (pictured right). How we aimed to do this was through playing football matches and coaching at kids camps in the villages and other surrounding areas.

Through doing this we hope that it has shed more light on the work that the Cuthberts are doing which is sharing the good news about Jesus Christ through the medium of football.



Rather than go through what we did on a day-to-day basis, I'm going to share a few experiences that stood out for me. Hard to believe that some experiences can top sharing a dorm with Jonny Gamble!!

The first memory that has stood out is the generosity that many of the people had even though materially they didn't have much. In one instance I gave a small gummy bear sweet to one of the young children.

Rather than eat the sweet himself he took a wee bite of the sweet before passing it on to the next person.

In the end one gummy bear sweet was shared between five young lads. I just thought it was amazing about the kindness and generosity shown, but it made me think about the even greater love that God has for us as He sent His Son Jesus to

take the place we deserve on the cross.

Romans 5-8: "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

A second memory that stood out to me was looking over the capital Dakar from the plane window.

Senegal has a
population of just
shy of 17 million
people, with 95% of
the population
identifying as
Muslim.

From that airplane window it struck me at how privileged we are in Northern Ireland to be able to have even heard the Gospel once, to read from God's word, to have fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

These are all privileges that many people in Senegal do not have, and often that is something I can take for granted.

This reminds me of an old Gospel hymn—"Count your blessings, name them one by one; Count your many blessings see what God hath done."

Overall this was a truly eye-opening experience, one that will never be forgotten.

All glory to God.



Ambassadors Football—Senegal

A couple of months ago I, along with a group of men from different parts of Great Britain and America, travelled out to Senegal to support the missionary work of Ambassadors Football.

The group from Northern Ireland travelled down to Dublin on June 9th where we would complete the first of two flights on route to Dakar, Senegal. We stopped in Lisbon, Portugal for around six hours which gave the group an opportunity to get to know each other before we would be serving together.

After a long day of travelling we finally arrived at Dakar International Airport at around midnight. Upon arrival we met the Ambassadors missionary worker Rob Cuthbert and, shortly after, headed to our accommodation for the week. We spent 10 days in Senegal which will forever change my perspective on how privileged we are here in Northern Ireland. During our time in Senegal we had the opportunity to learn about their culture, taste the local food, build relationships with the surrounding villages, coach children and young people

football and life skills, play against local football teams (including the PSG Academy of Excellence) as well as learning to fully depend on God to endure our new surroundings. Each morning we would have devotions, led by one of the men which would help us focus on why we are out here, to serve God. Each day would include working alongside various Christian missionaries in Senegal to coach and get alongside the young people. Senegal is a place where preaching the gospel on the side of the street can result in imprisonment so we didn't have the opportunity to be involved in direct evangelism, but I hope that by serving God in this way, the relationships built between Ambassadors and the locals will bear much fruit in the future as people realise their need for a Saviour.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:58

Matthew Reain







Exodus team to Hungary— Matthew Coulter



I'm Matthew and this summer I went to Nyírbátor, Hungary on an Exodus team.

We flew to Budapest on 27th July, where we met up with two other Exodus teams and were whisked away to a 'bush camp' in the forest called Freedom Springs. We stayed there for a couple of days, picking up enough of the language to get by, eating some interesting meals that tasted a lot better than they looked, and preparing for going to our children's club. After sharing our testimonies and worshipping around the camp fire, we said goodbye to the other Exodus teams and headed off to Nyírbátor to meet the team from the church we would be partnering with.

On arrival, we were greeted by the local minister and shown to our accommodation. It had showers and beds which was a relief to the whole team, having had neither at Freedom Springs.

During our week running the children's club, we started each day with an early rise at 6:30, a quick breakfast, and then some fun games with the kids as they began arriving as early as 7:00. 'Kacsa Kacsa Liba' (Duck Duck Goose) was a favourite.

Next, each team member would take it in turns to deliver a children's talk, typically accompanied by a drama, which was good fun for both the kids and us. Then we sang songs with the children, with half of them in

English and half in Hungarian, followed by a craft prepared by the team.

After this we had lunch, which was of exceptional standard most of the time, and finished our club with three hours of free time, consisting of Lego, board games, football and running around manically outside in the scorching sun, which the kids seemed to enjoy most. After our children's club, we had a few hours to prepare for our teens' club and have dinner.

After dinner, the teens started arriving, and we played a variety of games from Northern Ireland for about an hour. Next, we did a Bible study with the teens, translated by our Hungarian translators, and finished off the night with a variety of activities, including a game of football between Northern Ireland and Hungary.

We also enjoyed a Northern Irish night, consisting of a social, as well as a Hungarian night, which helped us to understand the culture and games of Hungary. After our teens' club, we completed final preparations for the next day and went to bed.

Overall, it was a genuine privilege serving in Hungary, and I feel it really strengthened my faith, and I know that God was present in Hungary, working in the hearts of the children and teens among whom we served.

Finally, I would just like to thank everyone in church who prayed for me, and attended our coffee morning.





Exodus team to India

by Lucy Copes



On the 10th July, I travelled to India with an organisation called Exodus.

There were nine of us on my team and prior to going to India, we had meetings every Thursday for two hours.

In these meetings we prepared for our trip and prayed and studied the bible together. We studied several books in the bible together. The book of Thessalonians stood out to me in particular with Paul's instructions concerning Godly living and the affliction Christians will face. Paul's letters encouraged us greatly as we sought to grow in our faith and become disciple makers.

We really gelled as a team and we were excited to see what was ahead of us. It took us a day and a half to travel to where we were staying which was ICMC, an orphanage in Salem in the South of India. When we arrived, the children were so excited to see us and greeted us cheering and clapping. Throughout our time at the orphanage we ran several bible clubs where we taught the kids stories, memory verses and then did crafts and games which they thoroughly enjoyed. One of the memory verses we used was Psalm 139:14 "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Many of these children have been through

a lot to have ended up in the orphanage. We wanted to make sure they knew they are special and loved by God as they are rejected by society and sometimes even by their own families.

We did many activities including driving up a mountain and eating in a restaurant at the top, and we got fitted with Sarees. At ICMC there is a school where there are numerous degrees the students can study, a nursing college and a place for widows to stay. We also attended the opening of a hospital at ICMC where my leaders cut the ribbon. We went to the nurses graduation where they had waited two years for as they wanted us to be the special guests.

My favourite part of the team was getting to know the kids. They were so grateful and excited each day and it was a true pleasure to be around them. The dependence upon God for every task which goes on in the orphanage and the gratitude towards God was so encouraging for us and taught me a lesson in this way also. There were so many clear examples of how God provides and how He has had His hand upon the running of the orphanage.

Pastor Jay, the founder of the orphanage, shared his testimony which was very emotional. He was



an orphan and suffered greatly. Years later, he passed several children who were living on the streets. He felt a call from God to rescue these children and from this he started an orphanage in his house. Since then, through prayer and God's powerful hand upon the orphanage, Pastor Jay acquired many acres and was able to set up an orphanage where there is now over 200 children. There was once over 1000

children, but the Indian government created a law stating that orphanages could only take in orphans from Salem and not from all over India. Pastor Jay was a great inspiration to us all as he has devoted his life to this work and served God faithfully in this way. Christians are becoming more persecuted in India so ICMC needs prayer that they will be able to continue sharing God's word with these children.

The food was lovely but also very spicy and not the most delightful thing at 9am in the morning, but it was so interesting indulging in a completely different culture and it was the most amazing experience.

Thank you for all for your prayer and support.





Portrush CSSM—Peter Copes

This summer I lead for two weeks at Portrush CSSM.

I had the best time, met a lot of great people, built on my own personal faith and grew in confidence when leading from the front, giving a talk, teaching a verse or leading a quiz.

To start the day, we woke up early at 8:00 for morning devotions run by CSSM leaders John and Heather. We were tired but still challenged and encouraged ready for another day of Beach ministry, then sat down to breakfast.

I was part of the senior's group which looked after children between the ages of 12 – 14. We had up to 40 children daily which was great. A big part of CSSM was text groups, this is where we split into groups, read through a portion of the bible then had the opportunity to ask and answer questions. This was a time we could communicate the good news of the gospel and gain an understanding on their viewpoints of faith and a time of strengthening and encouragement. It was quiet at the start but once we got to know our groups a couple days in, they were happy to disclose

their own faith, answer questions and get involved. We had CSSM Live which was all groups meeting down on the beach for a time of songs, stories, quizzes and the drama. This was always great, seeing over 300 people on the beach there for fun but also to hear the good news of Jesus was incredible and something I am very thankful to have had the opportunity to be a part of.

As always CSSM organised their classic beach activities, fight the tide and marble drop. These were incredible, I think I had more fun than the kids. Everyone got so involved and was really wanting their team to win. I had a great time at Portrush CSSM, I was very encouraged by this ministry and will hopefully serve up in Portrush again next Summer.



CEF National Leaders Conference

By David McClintock

During the month of August, I had the privilege of travelling with Samuel Adams (Mission director of Revival Movement Association) to the Middle East. Names of certain people and some place have been excluded due to security reasons.

The purpose of our trip was to attend a C.E.F national leaders conference. Child Evangelism Fellowship are sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with children all around the world. One of the regions which they work is the Middle East. The region spans from Morocco in the West to Bangladesh in the East, which is almost 10,000km. C.E.F workers are reaching this special mission field in 18 different languages. Once a year the national leaders come together for a national leaders conference. This is a great opportunity for them to encourage and be encouraged as they share about the work and fellowship with one another.

From the moment we set off on the Friday morning until we arrived home the following Monday, I can 100% say that the Lord was in it all! We arrived at midnight, cleared customs and walked straight through with four suitcases full of Arabic C.E.F literature, without being checked or questioned at all! We met our driver and he took us to the campus, where the conference was being held. After a few hours sleep we attended breakfast where we met the regional director. Following breakfast we got straight into the conference where we heard from Reese Kauffman (President Emeritus C.E.F). Then all the different leaders from the middle eastern countries shared how the children's work was going in their respective countries and the many challenges they face. In the afternoon we had some excellent one-to-one meetings with leaders from a range of countries, some of whom R.M.A already ship literature to.

On the Saturday evening we had an incredibly exciting meeting with a guy from another ministry who is working to import containers of literature into the Middle East. He was able to advise on the best ports to use regarding safety and ease and which ones to avoid. Following this meeting



Samuel was able to introduce him to the C.E.F leadership. It was a special moment to see the Lord bringing His people together like this for the sake of the Gospel and I felt very privileged to be there and witness it.

The Sunday morning service was another personal highlight for me. Worshipping with brothers and sisters from across the Middle East and sharing in the Lord's supper—this was very special.

The relationship between R.M.A and C.E.F continues to grow year on year and as a result of this trip it has opened and developed opportunities to reach more and more children with the Gospel across a difficult and challenging region.

Pray that the Lord would continue to bless the work of Revival Movement Association and C.E.F and that as Gospel literature and teaching resources for children get into the Middle East region it would turn hearts and lives of many children to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, bringing newness of life and spiritual freedom to many families.

As the words from Psalm 119 remind us..."The entrance of thy word bringeth light."

Exodus trip to Latvia

By Katie Annett

On 5th August a team of young people from around Northern Ireland headed to Latvia for 10 days with Exodus.

We had been meeting together each week for several months before the trip to study the bible together, get to know one another and bond as a team.

These times were really worthwhile and we all grew in our faith and grew together as team members.

We had a range of people on the team mainly aged between 17 -21. It was unlike other teams where you have little contact in advance of the actual event and this build up really helped to give us an idea of what Exodus stood for and what was expected of us as team members and as Christians.

We headed to Latvia and had some time to settle in before hitting the ground running with street outreach





The food was extremely challenging, something like gruel.



and youth activities.

Language proved to be a huge barrier as our translators were quite young and people would often not take the time to listen to the end of the translation. It was very challenging to meet people from a completely different culture who had a different idea of church and religion to anything we had experienced before.

I found that the young people were enthusiastic and interested and were keen to be involved in the activities we organized. The adults were much less receptive to us and the street work we did handing out tracts and engaging them in conversation was difficult.

The food was extremely challenging, something like gruel and eating it proved one of the biggest challenges.

We certainly came home lighter than we left and needless to say there were a few night time excursions to McDonalds !

The Latvian team we worked with were very enthusiastic and wanted to ensure they made full use of us when we were there so the days were long and very busy with a lot of time spent in church from morning to night.

All in all it was a bit of a culture shock and as Exodus had not been to Latvia before, many of the experiences were new to us all.

However, we made great friends as a team and through the whole Exodus experience we certainly grew closer to the Lord and saw first hand what it is to rely on him.

Thank you for all your prayers and support.





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Training week at Seaview

By Victoria Bannon

At the beginning of the summer I, along with around 100 other young people, spent a week in Seaview, Kilkeel, for Training Week. Training week is all about learning how to communicate the Gospel effectively to children while also deepening your relationship with God.

Each day we attended different classes such as 'What is the Gospel', 'Seeing through Their Eyes' and 'The Bible Lessons'. These classes talked about the urgency of the Gospel and how many people haven't heard or don't want to hear about Jesus. These classes really challenged me to go out and share the Gospel.

These classes were also useful as they helped me to understand how best to communicate the Bible in a way that was simple but also conveyed the urgency behind the message. The classes also allowed us to look at Christianity from a different perspective and to see how we might be perceived by those around us.

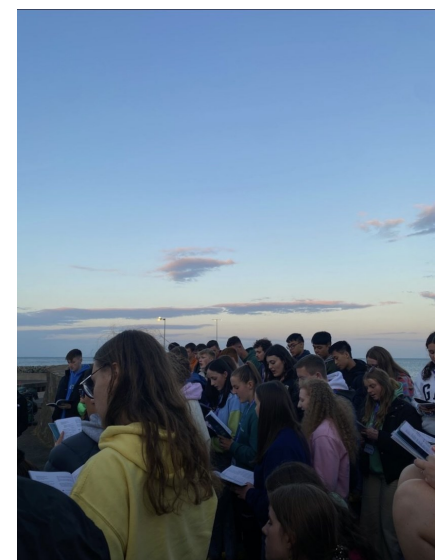
As a way to practice what we had learnt throughout the week, we were each given a memory verse that we had to present in front of a group of around eight other people and a CEF worker, which was definitely daunting at first. The Bible verse that I was given to present was:

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14 verse 6

We were given a guideline of how we should present it effectively and then we had feedback from our CEF worker. This was to allow us to build confidence when sharing the Gospel in different kids clubs we were involved with throughout the summer.

Along with the memory verse we were also given the story of Zacchaeus to tell, which emphasised the message that Jesus came to seek and save the lost. This helps kids realise that no matter where you are in life or how far you feel from God, He is always there if you are just willing to turn to Him.

Overall the week was so encouraging as it allowed us to grow in confidence when sharing the Gospel and become more confident in sharing our faith with those around us. It was also such a good week to start off the summer of outreach, as it was so motivating to see so many young people come together and prepare to serve God. I would definitely recommend Training Week to anyone that has thought about it.





By Leah Spiers

Throughout the summer I spent three weeks sleeping on an air mattress in Portstewart Baptist, and yes, it's as glamorous as it sounds. The first two weeks of July were spent serving alongside 80 other young people, at Portstewart CSSM. The theme this year was 'Who is Jesus?' focusing on Jesus as Man, God and Saviour to help the children develop a personal relationship with Him.

It was a busy and sometimes chaotic couple of weeks with the bible club running Monday to Friday. The day started and ended with the team joining for praise, a devotion and each section sharing what we can be praying for. In our sections we had a bible club for an hour before joining for CSSM live, which is a chance for all the sections to join together and learn more about who Jesus is, through singing, memory verses, story recaps and quizzes. In the afternoon we had family events including a treasure hunt, sandcastle competition and the big night bashes where we all dressed up and had CSSM live with the parents. In the evening we gathered together in our sections for a fun activity, like messy night, Teddy bears picnic or a movie night and interviewed a leader. This was an opportunity for the children to ask some silly and serious questions. On a Sunday we went around the local churches taking Sunday school and taking part in the service which was a great way for families to see what CSSM is.



I was a leader in the 'shrimps' section, age 4&5. It definitely brought its challenges with the kids being so young and unsettled in an unfamiliar environment, but as a team we prayed that the kids would feel comfortable and get to know God better. Our prayers were most certainly answered with over 80 kids attending and we were so thankful to hear of six getting saved.

A highlight for me was taking small groups. Initially I was a little hesitant with having all 4-year-olds, but we have an amazing God who settled the children. At the start of the week none of the children wanted to pray aloud, but it was such a joy to see God work in their lives as they grew in confidence to then all praying in small groups and even one praying at the front of CSSM live with all the parents.

The two weeks of CSSM taught me so much about the power of prayer. Time after time as we debriefed in the evenings, we saw prayers answered. A particular time was during 'praise at the prom'. After a day of raining it cleared up and we were able to glorify God through praise in the middle of Portstewart. Although the rain came on for the last song everyone gathered in underneath the band stand for shelter and we continued to sing praise to God with 'Hey, Jesus loves me'.



EHC Africa conference

During the month of August, Samuel and I were privileged to attend the Every Home for Christ (EHC) Africa conference in Addis Abbaba, Ethiopia.

This was to be my first time travelling to the heart of Africa, and so I experienced a mixture of excitement and uncertainty in the run up to our trip.

By God's grace, our travel plans went according to plan, and after a couple of lengthy flights we landed in Addis in the early hours of Monday morning. It wasn't long before the differences between home and Africa became apparent.

The city swarmed with people, even during the first hours of daylight. The roads were crammed with beaten-up vehicles that bore the wounds of roads with many lanes but very few lines or traffic lights. The city consisted of a few impressive, well-constructed office blocks, shops and restaurants interspersed between hundreds and thousands of cramped, untidy huts. The contrast was huge, poverty was everywhere.

Following a few hours of rest and recuperation, we were kindly met by the national director of CEF in Ethiopia, Zerihune Furgassa, who offered to let us see a 5-day children's bible club in the area. We were taken to a local children's village which homed hundreds of children who had been orphaned, mainly because of bereavement.

The club itself was attended by around 50 children, and was remarkably similar to the CEF clubs in the UK. It was led by a very capable team of young, native volunteers, and despite the torrential rain and

thunderstorms outside, the children engaged well with the program.

After enjoying Monday evening with Zerihune and his family, we were ready to get to work. The EHC Africa conference kicked off on Tuesday morning. Over 100 leaders from across the continent gathered to worship, fellowship and be reminded of the EHC Africa vision and plan for the years ahead. It was a humbling experience to be present with so many godly, Christian leaders. As you can imagine, the worship was much more expressive than the Presbyterianism I've grown up with, yet I was reminded that we all together were worshipping the same Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Over the course of our three days at the conference, we were blessed hearing many encouraging testimonies about how the Lord was at work through the literature we supplied. Personally, it was a joy to meet those who work on the front lines, distributing our tracts and Gospels to homes and villages in difficult-to-reach places. Their gratitude for our partnership was evident in many of our conversations, and the need for more literature was equally clear. Samuel and I had the opportunity to update the EHC leaders about the work of Revival Movement, and we received a number of orders for more material. We were also able to give out three suitcases of tracts, flashcards and Gospels of John.

The conference came to a close on Thursday evening, and following a full 24 hours of travel we arrived safely home.

Despite the fatigue and sickness that comes with long-distance travel, our time in Ethiopia was invaluable. We experienced great mutual encouragement with the many faithful leaders putting their shoulder to the wheel in Africa. Plenty of orders and reports have been received, paving the way for years of future Gospel partnership.

Jonathan Rodgers





Zerihune, the national director fo the work of CEF in Ethiopia, along with co-worker Eskinder, right, and Samuel Adams, RMA, left



Immanuel and Jacqueline, who work in Angola, where to buy a bible costs 2-months wages



IFES World Assembly

By Lorna Moore

I work for the European Region of IFES (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students), helping to lead the European Christian Union movement as they inspire and equip students to live for Jesus on their university campus. In August, I had the opportunity and privilege to travel to Indonesia for the IFES World Assembly – a gathering of our global IFES family (students, staff, faculty and board members) that happens every four years. We were 900 people from 167 countries together in a hotel in Jakarta, and as delegates gathered, the hotel became a riot of colour, filled with many languages in a buzz of animated conversation, renewing friendships, getting to know new people, networking and telling stories of individual movements and God's faithfulness.

We met together to celebrate God's goodness to our worldwide family – we also celebrated our 75th birthday – and to encourage one another, as well as to be challenged by God to go further in our own walk with Him. We worshipped together and studied God's Word together,

exploring the Psalms through teaching and small groups for discussion and fellowship – my small group had representatives from New Zealand, Malaysia and Mongolia. A fantastic time learning from each other and let's face it; when else am I ever going to study the Bible with someone from Mongolia?!

The theme of the conference was 'Tabah dan Tangguh: Witnesses in the University and Beyond'. The Indonesian words *Tabah* and *Tangguh* are related to God's faithful follower in Psalm 1 – suggesting steadfastness and strength, a life that looks like a well-watered tree, able to endure and thrive in whatever season we face. Renewed resilience in the worldwide mission of IFES was prayed for and a focus of our seminars, that stimulated a biblical approach to current matters such as mental health, creation care, art and justice. It was phenomenal to meet fellow workers and students who are undertaking the task of providing a Gospel witness in every university, in every country in the world.





There are too many highlights to count, but seeing the vastness of IFES and the richness of the organisation was incredible. The 'Opening Ceremony' left me in awe – people cheering their brothers and sisters from around the world, and seeing just how many countries we are present in. Meeting people from different countries and cultures, including courageous Christians from 'closed' countries, living extraordinary lives of faith in contexts where their lives are literally risked every day.



The hospitality we encountered from the Indonesian movement was superb and completely selfless. Lasting memories are the times we worshipped together – singing in French, English, Spanish, Indonesian, African dialects with our global family was just spectacular. It was a real image of Heaven; Christ's body from every nation, tribe and tongue praising together and praying together and I stood in awe of God's goodness, mercy and love to His children.





Connect Tent Mission and Children's Fortnight

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Jeremiah 8:20

Mr Weir preached on this little verse from the Old Testament on the penultimate night of the mission. In many ways, it sums up our two weeks. We rejoice that there was a harvest; people were saved, but we also recognise that many still are not.

Connect, the umbrella organisation for the local evangelical churches (First and Second Presbyterian, Reformed Presbyterian, Ballykeel Baptist and St. John's and Garvaghy Parish Churches) organised a two week evangelistic mission from 11th-25th June 2023. As a result of all the activity, we were also glad to welcome on board Drumlough Presbyterian and Growell Gospel Hall.

A 600-man tent was erected on the Rathfriland Road, between Dromara and Finnis. The press release dispatched on behalf of Connect said, *"The sun shone and for two weeks the tent in Dromara was overflowing with local people as they gathered to praise God and listen to the Good News of the Gospel."*

The Ministers of the local churches led the meetings every evening, as well as the music groups/praise groups/choirs from the local congregations. We want to record our thanks to our Youth Praise Group (Joy, Leah, Jonny and Peter - pictured right) who led on the Friday evening and to Robert and members of the choir who led on the Sunday evening. John Wallace, one of our own members, shared his testimony on the second Friday evening, too. Connect invited Belfast born evangelist, Mr John



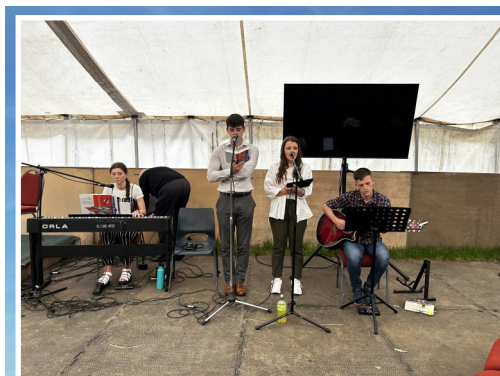
Weir, to be the guest speaker each evening. We also want to record our gratitude to him for his stirring messages and the additional prayer times he had in the area during the mission itself.

Running just before the meeting was a children's outreach, organised by local children's evangelist, Mr Colin Tinsley (Hope for Youth Ministries). You will have already read about some of our congregation who served with Colin over the summer months. The annual children's meeting moved from Dromara Primary School to the specially erected tent. Local children enjoyed singing, games, memory verses, bible stories and much more.

Buses were dispatched every evening through Dromara, to Kinallen, Dromore, Anahilt and beyond. It was decided that instead of just one week, this should take place for the two weeks. Over 300 children were in attendance. We want to

record our gratitude to Colin and his team for his dedication over the two weeks.

The press release ended by saying, *"special thanks to the local people who volunteered in so many ways to make these events possible. We are especially thankful to God for the harvest of souls. We intend to organise some follow-on initiatives in the Connect Hall."* We want to thank everyone from our congregation who was involved, either through the activities, tent erection, car parking, refreshments and many, many other ways. If you, or someone you know became a Christian or became convicted about spiritual things, please let the Rev. Moore know. Connect will be organising some follow-up in the early Autumn, so please keep your eye out if you would like to attend. Even as you read this, *"the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."* Jeremiah 8:20.



**DOES GOD
EXIST?**

or was

**EVERYTHING
CREATED**

by

NO ONE

from

NOTHING?

**In the beginning God created the
heavens and the earth Gen. 1v1**

Scan Me

