



Mission Trip to Kenya

On Thursday 27th April 2023, Revs Ian Harris and Colin Mercer of the Free Presbyterian Mission Board travelled to Kenya to participate in a Pastors' Conference. The annual conference was organised in conjunction with the Mission Board, and involved Free Presbyterian missionary, Rev Malcolm Patterson, and pastors who serve in Glory Bible Church under the auspices of the Free Presbyterian Mission Society Africa.

This year's conference was held in La Voyage Hotel and Conference Centre, outside Kitale. It commenced on Monday 1st May and continued for four days. During the conference, messages were brought on various subjects, including: the Trinity; the eternity, immutability and holiness of God; the Christian and political involvement; the importance of the Church Prayer Meeting; church membership; consecration to the Lord's service; sermon preparation, structure and content; the importance of children's work; and church planting. A brief question and answer session followed some of the addresses.

During the week, fifty-three pastors were in attendance, some of whom had travelled a long distance to be present. The majority of the pastors were able



☒ Above: Pastor's Conference

to stay in the hotel accommodation and enjoy fellowship in the mornings and evenings. Following the final meeting on Thursday, certificates of attendance and gifts were presented to those who had attended.

Reflecting on the week, Mission Board Chairman, Rev Colin Mercer noted, 'This was my first Pastors' conference in Kenya, and it was encouraging to see so many assemble each day to hear the Word of God. There was great attentiveness and interest in each of the sessions. It was also a blessing to meet with men who have a burden for the work of God in their land, and who are endeavouring to press on with gospel preaching.' Rev Malcolm Patterson and members of the General Committee of the Glory Bible Church are to be commended for their labours in organising a conference that was a blessing to all who attended.

In addition to speaking at the conference, Revs Harris and Mercer had the opportunity to preach in various churches during their visit. They desired

☒ Below: GBC Nyaporo



to encourage the pastors and their congregations and to see first-hand the progress and challenges of the work. The congregations that were visited are small in comparison to the large charismatic churches scattered throughout Kenya, but many children and young people attend the services and sit under the faithful preaching of the Word of God.

Free Presbyterian involvement in Kenya goes back a long time and the Lord has blessed those many years of labour. The faithful sowing of the Gospel and the patient teaching of God's people have brought forth spiritual fruit, and continue to impact many individuals and their families in different places. On his return, Rev Mercer commented, 'Throughout our visit, we were received and welcomed with Christian love and Kenyan hospitality. The Kenyan pastors with whom we fellowshiped greatly appreciate the prayerful and practical support of the Free Presbyterian Church. They extend their greetings to our home congregations. The fellowship with God's people – young and old – remains a cherished memory of our time there.'



☒ Photo: GBC Shimo La Tewa

MISSIONARY VISION

Kenya is an open door for missionary work, and there is a great opportunity to reach children and adults with the gospel of Christ. The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. We are thankful for those who continue to preach the Word, and for the assistance given to the local pastors and congregations by Rev and Mrs Patterson and others.

As Rev Mercer and Rev Harris travelled home, their prayer was (and remains) that God would raise up others to go to Kenya and be co-labourers with His people there. It is

a land of great beauty, and we should pray, as Moses prayed in Psalm 90: 'O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.' ■

✍ **Rev Colin Mercer,**
Mission Board Chairman.



📷 **Photo:** GBC Tantana

Robert McConnell's School Ministry

The ministry of reaching children with the Gospel through school assemblies is a bit like painting the Forth Bridge in Scotland, because, as I come to the end of one school year, I begin to contemplate the start of the next. It is a continuous cycle of contacting principals or assembly coordinators at the end of every summer to make all the necessary arrangements for the following terms. With upwards of 130 bookings per year, much prayer is needed to prepare suitable messages.

The school ministry that I am involved in stretches from Newcastle to as far up as Antrim town. It also covers the Ards Peninsula and North Down, including the cities of Bangor, Lisburn and Belfast. Going into around 50 schools, I work mainly with the state-run and integrated primary school sectors.



It is my privilege to reach 12-15,000 boys and girls every year, most of whom have no biblical background at all. Weekly, I would get to speak to upwards of 2,000 children. Sometimes, because of the size of some of the inner-city schools, I would have up to 600 children before me in one sitting.

Ministry in the schools is a most fruitful one because, not only do I get to present the message of salvation to the children, but the teaching staff are present as well. Through the means of prize giving, the Word of God also gets into homes by way of bookmarks and tracts. Many schools

are also willing to take and distribute invitations for the Summer Holiday Bible Clubs.

Of course, this ministry has its challenges as well. More and more, Christianity is being discarded by society and this permeates down to the youth as well. There is a widening lack of biblical knowledge which is becoming very evident even amongst older children, but, as I come and go, I leave it all with the Lord and His mercy, in the hope of a bountiful harvest of souls. ■

✍ **Robert McConnell,**
Children's Evangelist.

MISSIONARY VISION

New Missionary Curriculum at the Whitefield College of the Bible

For several years the Whitefield College of the Bible and the Free Presbyterian Mission Board have been exploring the possibility of developing and expanding the College curriculum to include more missionary-oriented content. Various meetings have been held, involving the College Principal, Rev Timothy Nelson, and members of the Mission Board, including past and present Chairmen. These meetings have been constructive and profitable and led to firm proposals being presented to the College Academic Committee, College Management Committee and, in due course, to the General Presbytery for consideration.



In April 2023, the Presbytery approved the introduction of additional class time to facilitate the enhanced missionary training in the College.

From September 2023, students in their final year will attend Thursday afternoon classes with a distinct missionary focus. Subjects will include: the theology of missions; linguistics; IT skills; organising an NGO; Medical First Aid; general mechanical and electrical maintenance; and other matters considered relevant and appropriate.

The classes will be interactive, and past and present missionaries will participate. The module-style format will include PowerPoint presentations and hands-on practical work. The Mission Board is grateful for the wholehearted support of the College Principal, College Committees and Presbytery as this new aspect of the curriculum commences. Prayers are coveted for students and lecturers, that each one may know the Lord's blessing. ■

✍ **Rev Colin Mercer,**
Mission Board Chairman.

What is an NGO and why are they needed in Missionary Work?

Several of our supporters have asked these questions, and, for the benefit of all our supporters, the answer is given by the Mission Board Treasurer.

We are surrounded in daily life by TLAs (Three Letter Abbreviations), and it is no different in modern missionary work. Some of these abbreviations are specific to the work and location, such as ECS (Emmanuel Christian School), BoM (Board of Management), OVC (Orphans and Vulnerable Children), and some are general abbreviations that are widely used across the world, such as NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation).

In Uganda, an NGO is defined as 'Any legally constituted private, voluntary grouping of individuals or associations involved in community work which augment government work but are clearly not for profit or commercial purposes.' As we seek to deliver education and other support services, then, clearly, we fall under that definition, and are, therefore, required to register. We first obtained registration as 'The Free Presbyterian Mission Society Africa' – our legal entity in Uganda, in April 2017 – and have just renewed the registration in April this year. We thank God for answered prayer in that renewal.

There is a lot of work to apply for and maintain the registration. We have created a five-year development and work plan, together with a five-year budget. We are also required to report against that plan and budget on an annual basis. There are, however, many benefits from having the NGO

status: it gives us a recognised position of trust in the country; it facilitates bank accounts and work permits; it allows us to employ school staff; and, also, it offers some tax benefits.

Please continue to pray for Uganda, and especially for this work which goes on behind the scenes. It is essential to facilitate our continuing work in both the school and the church, and it enhances our standing and reputation in the community in which we operate. ■

✍ **Mr Alastair Hamilton,**
Mission Board Treasurer.



MISSIONARY VISION

Work Team in Uganda



After much planning, on Friday 7th April 2023, a work team left from Magherafelt to travel to the Emmanuel Christian School in Uganda with the aim of completing several projects onsite.

The team, which consisted of nine men and two ladies, travelled to Dublin where we boarded a flight to Doha and then on to Entebbe. We arrived at the school late in the evening with enough time to unload the tools and materials before travelling on to our accommodation.

After a welcome rest on the Lord's Day, we commenced work on Monday morning. There were five main areas of work, with each member of the team assigned to a particular task:

- Plumb the three missionary apartments for hot water and repair leaking fittings in the water tanks - Rev Graham Lucas and Benjamin Lucas (Garvagh FPC).
- Complete electrical upgrade work in the School Office and missionary apartments - Sam Snodgrass (Londonderry FPC) and Luke Dobbin (Omagh FPC).
- Strip out the old electrical wiring throughout the site and conduct necessary repairs - Richard Foster (Kilskeery FPC) and Kyle Wenlock (Magherafelt FPC).
- Install a sound system in the church - Mark Linton (Magherafelt FPC).
- Tile four classroom floors - Denver McGuckin and Robert Bell (Magherafelt FPC).

Elaine and Abigail Wenlock (Magherafelt FPC) had the responsibility of preparing all the meals for the team, assisting with the work onsite when required, doing crafts with the children in the afternoons, and attending the outreach on Friday evening.

Rev and Mrs Baxter were also an integral part of the team and assisted in all areas of work.

Each person can testify of being blessed richly, and we would like to thank Madam Noreen and the Mission Board for all their help and support. ■

✉ **Kyle Wenlock,**
Magherafelt FPC.

Youth Camps & Evangelism in Spain



At Easter, I was invited to preach in a youth camp that was held near a city called Cuenca. There was a good group of young people from different churches, and I spoke on the life of Joseph. I was impressed by the interest that many of these young

people showed for spiritual matters, and I pray that God will bring them to Christ, and call some of them to the full-time ministry.

However, much of our focus in the Spring has been in organising our own youth camp. It was held here in our region from 29th April to 1st May. We had young people from churches in Seville, Alcorcon, Toledo, Aranjuez, and Alicante. The theme was 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth', and there were four Bible studies, dealing with the last two chapters of the book of Ecclesiastes. It required a lot of preparation, but we thank the Lord that He undertook in all these things, and we believe the camp was a great blessing

for many. We thank the Lord for all the people in the congregation who helped in this ministry.

We will have our annual gospel mission and anniversary meetings here between 9th –11th June. A Pastor from Barcelona, who has had a great impact in my life, is going to come to preach, and he will be speaking about the hope that can be found in Jesus Christ alone. Pray that many unsaved will come to listen to the Word. This pastor will also bring a very special display of Old Spanish Bibles that he possesses, and he will tell us something about the history of our Bible. ■

✉ **Alex Bernabeu,**
Cortijos Nuevos, Spain.

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