

50th Anniversary

Mission Vision Conference



Above: The Officers of Presbytery along with Officers of the Mission Board, past and present.

In March 1974, the general Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church approved the formation of a Mission Board and appointed its first members. No one at that time could have predicted the impact that decision would have for thousands of people across the world. From small and humble beginnings, the missionary endeavour of the Free Presbyterian church has continued, under God, to

go from strength to strength. Our first missionaries served in Spain and Kenya, and while those two countries continue to feature in our missionary efforts, we now have missionary interest in several other nations, including an extensive home missions programme.



Right: Rev Mercer preaching at the conference.

Below: Banners displaying the various mission fields in which the Board labours.



To mark the 50th anniversary of the Mission Board, a series of special services were arranged from 6th-9th March 2024. The theme was 'Mission in Action' and focused on three fundamental parts of a biblical mission strategy. On consecutive nights, messages were preached on the priority of evangelism, the purpose of discipleship, and the pattern of church planting. Short video presentations were shown highlighting the outworking of the strategy across our various mission fields and reports were given, marking exciting developments in the work. On Saturday 9th March, following an anniversary dinner, the Rev Samuel Murray (Moderator) preached on 'looking forward and pressing on' in the Lord's work.

The conference was a time to focus on the Lord's mercies in the past and to pray for continued mercies for the future. We are thankful to God for raising up missionaries to go to the mission field; for stirring the hearts of His people to support the mission arm of the church prayerfully and practically; and for the ongoing help He gives to the Mission Board. For fifty years we have witnessed numerous answers to prayer and rejoice in all that He has done and will continue to do.

The Mission Board is indebted to all who attended the services in person or watched online. We are grateful to the Lisburn congregation for hosting another Mission Vision conference and for providing refreshments each evening. As the services closed, prayer was offered that God would continue to provide for our mission work, bless our present missionary candidates, and raise up others who will say, 'Here am I; send me' (Isaiah 6:8). ■

Rev Colin Mercer,
Mission Board Chairman.



Message from the Moderator

 **Above:** The Moderator preaching at the Missionary Rally.

On Saturday 10th March 2024, I had the privilege of preaching in Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church at the final service organised by our Mission Board to mark its 50th anniversary. The congregation consisted of past and present members of the Mission Board; past, present, and outgoing labourers under the Board; Missionary Council representatives; members of Presbytery; and friends from across our denomination. The heartbeat of the missionary enterprise of the Free Presbyterian Church was healthy and strong in this gathering

What the Lord has accomplished through the missionary vision of the Free Presbyterian Church is truly remarkable. The beginning was small, but the latter end has greatly increased. Many have risen up and many more will rise up to bless the Lord for the work of

 **Below:**
50th Anniversary Mission Board Dinner



our Mission Board and the missionaries who have laboured under its auspices.

On behalf of our whole church family, I would like to thank the Chairman and members of the Mission Board for their labours. Behind the scenes, they devote countless hours to praying for the work, planning each new phase, solving problems that arise, investigating the potential to evangelise in new harvest fields, and overseeing the practical support upon which our missionaries rely. May the Lord continue to bless our



Mission Board, its missionaries, and all who support this invaluable work. ■

 **Rev Samuel Murray,**
Moderator of Presbytery.

 **Below:** At the Mission Board dinner, Rev John Gray was presented with a Bible by the Chairman, Rev Colin Mercer, in acknowledgement of his 25 years of faithful service, as he stepped down from the Board.



MISSIONARY VISION

New Churches and Motorcycles in Nepal



 **Top:** Baptism of new Believers.



 **Above:** The church building near the Chinese border that must be vacated.

The Mission Board were recently made aware of a need for two new church buildings in Nepal. The first is near the Chinese border where a congregation and pastor currently meet in a blue tin church. This is a rented building which they must vacate, leaving them nowhere to congregate. Interestingly, a plot of land nearby has become available for purchase on which a building can be erected. Although this congregation, made up of poor people, has done remarkably well in saving money to build a new church, they are vastly short of the amount needed.

The second church is in mid-west Nepal. A congregation of approximately forty people meet with their pastor. Some of these people were saved through the radio broadcast, including several young people. The Moderator of the Nepal Presbytery, when visiting in this area, held Bible studies with these young people. He also had the privilege of baptising eight of them as they publicly professed Christ as their Saviour. They, too, need a church building and are looking for land on which to build.

The Mission Board, which has a particular burden to promote evangelism, church planting, and church maturity in Nepal, agreed to send financial support to each congregation to assist in purchasing land and erecting a suitable church structure. Please pray for these new congregations that they will be strong and fruitful.

Over the years, the Board has purchased motorcycles to enable Nepalese pastors and Presbytery officers to carry out their duties. Some of those bikes were purchased seven years ago and have been invaluable to the work. Rev Thapa had mentioned how these motorbikes have been repaired in the past and now need replacing. The Mission Board, having received this request, agreed to send funds, which, along with the resale value of the old bikes, will purchase six new motorcycles. Remember these men in prayer as they travel on dangerous roads doing the work of the Lord. ■

 **Rev David Brown,**
Asian Subcommittee Chairman.

Beulah Christian Literature (BCL) Bookshop Ministry in Kenya

A Christian bookshop manager once told us that all that is needed in Kenya to sell books is a meeting point. The kiosk in Kitale has proved this as it has a constant clientele requesting books and there, recently, we met a missionary couple from Turkana and were able to supply them with literature for their pastors and schools.

The bookshop in Kakamega which is much larger than the kiosk in Kitale has been described by those who visit it as 'a haven with diverse Christian books; supportive community and expert staff; a treasure trove of Christian literature; a cozy reading place; a serene bookshop with doctrinally sound and Gospel-oriented materials; a place to deepen one's spiritual walk.' We were encouraged by these comments and the fact that a receptionist at a local hotel recommends the bookshop to

visitors. Three employees in the mall attend the Tuesday Lunchtime Bible Study and BCL Kakamega is a witness to the local university.

So, whether it is a point of contact as in Kitale or a meeting place as in Kakamega, there are many satisfied customers who visit these two outlets of Beulah Christian Literature. Moreover, BCL being one of the two main bookshops stocking reformed materials enables us to supply books to both Faith College of the Bible, Eldoret and Bomet Bible College.

In the past when the books arrived from Northern Ireland via the Revival Movement Container, we stored them in a spare bedroom in the mission house, but as the number of books arriving increased due to the generosity of God's people at home, it was decided



 **Above:** Rev & Mrs Patterson in the new bookstore.

to renovate the two-room house on the lower compound and to use it as a bookstore. To assist us with the moving and organising of the books to the lower bookstore we had help from three girls, Joy, Linda, and Dorsila. The Kakamega church are presently renting the school on the compound where we stay, and a quantity of books was sent there for storage for the bookshop and literature work in western Kenya.

Pray that God will bless the books distributed by BCL. ■

 **Alison Patterson,**
Missionary to Kenya.

MISSIONARY VISION

Uganda

Ten Years On

It is amazing to consider that 3rd April 2024 marked ten years since the first visit to Emmanuel in Uganda by representatives of the Mission Board, which three years later in March 2017, led to the Mission Board officially taking over the running of the Emmanuel Mission station.

In the years that have since passed so quickly there has been a significant amount of development, expansion, and consolidation of the work. It is especially encouraging to think of the hundreds of people who have heard the Gospel through both the ministry of the Emmanuel Church and the Christian School. We rejoice that the Lord has blessed – to the saving and discipling of many people in the community. In addition to the meetings at the Emmanuel Church, there are now also two outreach Sunday Schools and a ministry in two local prisons.



 **Above:** Miss McAfee with the three registration certificates.



 **Pictured:** Pupils from the Emmanuel School lined up to welcome the Mission Board representatives in 2014.



 **Above:** The lower end of the building site

As a Board, we are more convinced than ever that the Lord has opened to us in the land of Uganda, 'A great door and effectual' (1 Cor 16:9). But there is much scope for further expansion – to plant churches and commence additional Sunday Schools. We pray that the Lord will raise up more labourers, especially from among the Ugandans, to carry the Lord's work there still further forward.

At this tenth anniversary there are some significant developments that are taking place, and some very positive tokens for good. In answer to prayer the Lord has been providing the personnel to strengthen our missionary team, and we look forward to the McAuleys joining Miss McAfee and the Carscaddens in Uganda later this year.

Also, a major building project is underway to provide appropriate and



 **Above:** Outreach Open Air Meeting

safe accommodation for our missionary families. The first stage of building a secure compound and putting in the access road is now well underway.

Just recently a very important milestone was reached when the Secondary School registration was granted. Now, for the first time in the twenty-year history of the Emmanuel School, all three departments of the school have official registration with the Education Authority in Uganda.

As we look back over these last ten years labouring in Uganda, we want to say a sincere thank you to all who have supported the ministry there in whatever way, and truly we say together, 'The Lord has done great things for us' (Psalm 126:3). ■

 **Rev David McMillan,**
Ugandan Subcommittee Chairman.

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