

# Reformed Vision

Spring 2012

A vision to be caught - a vision to be shared

## Going for God

If you are to 'go' for God in any service you must learn the lessons which Isaiah learned when God told him to 'go' in Isaiah chapter 6. And if you learn these lessons well, then you will 'go' cheerfully - and you'll be able to persevere in the work even in the most difficult circumstances.

First, we must understand that, in some way, we all need to 'go' - because we are all called to a ministry. Of course, there is something very distinctive about Isaiah's calling: it was to the office of the Ministry in the church of God - which is not a calling most of us will ever have. But there is still a Word ministry to which we are all called: Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians, we are to be 'living letters'. In other words, when people look at us and listen to us, they should be hearing the word of God from us and seeing it in our lives. Sadly, we can claim to be 'living letters' while the writing is smudged and confused. We are called to testify clearly to Christ by word and by example and to share the good news of the gospel.

Second, when we 'go' we can be sure to encounter difficulties. You are in a world that doesn't understand you and that, according to Jesus, hates you. There are times in history when this problem becomes more acute. Paul warned Timothy that, during the gospel era, 'perilous seasons' would come which would be characterised by heightened selfishness, covetousness, pride, blasphemy, lack of love and respect in families, ingratitude - and much else besides (2 Timothy 3:1-5). Such a 'perilous season' has clearly come in the UK - and it's as well to be aware of this before you 'go' on a labour for the Lord. But Paul tells Timothy, in these perilous times, to go on preaching the Gospel - 'Be ready in season (favourable times) and out of season (unfavourable times)' - see 2 Timothy 4:2, 3. Even out of season God has His work to accomplish.

Now if you're to 'go' and if the circumstances can be really discouraging, the great danger is that you become despondent. That despondency can harden into discouragement and your strength evaporates away, you feel like giving up and you have a sense of failure, and inadequacy. It is here that God's message to Isaiah becomes so important.

Now, I believe that Isaiah was struggling to some extent with these things in chapter 6. Although we can't be certain, it would seem that Isaiah was already preaching during the reign of Uzziah before he got this vision. But there was little fruit. Usually, when you've gone to do something for the Lord and nothing happens you wonder, 'Was it unproductive because of me? Was I the problem?' And even though Isaiah was highly gifted as a preacher and writer, I'm sure he often asked, 'Is it my lips Lord? Is it my unclean lips? Is it my service, and is it my witness, and is it my ministry?'

Now, the surprising thing is that, in chapter 6, God tells him that the situation is not going to change all that much! While there will be fruit, the spiritual decline will continue! If you were told that the result of your work would be like that, you would feel quite deflated. It would have crushed Isaiah too - except that God gave him a marvellous vision to encourage him. The vision is one of the glory of God in Christ. And it is

# Inside RV



**Teams 2012**



**Training Men  
In Sudan**



**Church Planting  
in Carrickfergus**



**Australian RPC**



**forms a new  
Central Presbytery**

this vision which will encourage him as he goes out with the Word of God to a people who are, largely, not going to respond all that well to it.

Isaiah sees the glory of Christ in two places. He sees it on the throne and on the altar. First, he sees Christ's glory on His throne. And His glory is twofold: First, there is the glory of his sovereignty: He is 'lifted high' on his throne and the whole created order is subject to Him. Despite his incarnation, that sovereignty of Christ has not changed. You should rejoice that when you knock on a door, the heart of the person you meet is in the hand of the Lord and He can turn it whatever way He wishes. I want you to remember that as you 'go'. There's no surprise to God behind any door anywhere and no situation is outwith God's control or plan. And you are not under his sovereignty as an enemy of God but as his friend. Remember that. Everything is in His place, in His time - and you are on His side.

Second, still on His throne, Isaiah sees the glory of Christ's holiness. Even the angels, who serve Him in perfection and 'go' for God constantly, are deeply conscious of that holiness as they serve. And you forget that holiness at your peril. You can't serve God unless you understand that He is holy. Let that govern your team, your speech, your discipline - your whole life. We serve a holy God who hates sin who wants it obliterated in us and obliterated in the people we meet with.

However, if all we saw was the glory of Christ on his throne in His sovereignty and His holiness, we would be inclined more to despair than hope - after all, who are we, as sinners, to serve a God like that? But notice that God doesn't just give a vision of sovereignty and holiness: He also gives a vision of forgiveness and service. And that comes in the altar. The glory of Christ is in the altar too.

The altar in Isaiah 6 certainly points to forgiveness. After all, the first object you met stepping inside the tabernacle to worship was a huge bronze altar on which the sin offering was laid. This large bronze altar, with the sacrifice laid upon it, was symbolic of the great sin offering that our Lord Jesus Christ offered. If you don't know that your sins are forgiven, if you don't know that you are reconciled to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, how can you 'go' anywhere for God?

But there was a second altar too - a golden one - and it pointed not to sacrifice but to service. It was an altar on which incense was burned in the presence of God. This burning incense symbolised the life of service, especially of prayer and worship, which we give to God. Crucially, it was connected intimately to the first altar because the coals on which the incense was to be burned had to come from that first altar of sacrifice.

This connection between the altars reminds us that a life of service is of no use unless it rises from having our sins freely forgiven by the Lord Jesus Christ. It also reminds us that justified sinners can be as certain of effective service as they are of having their sins forgiven. Christ is the key to both forgiveness and service. Because of Christ, the sovereign, holy God is for you and with you - in spite of our failings - and not against you. Because of His forgiveness, our prayers are heard and our witness is acknowledged and used by God either to harden or soften hearts as He sees fit.

Remember all that as you 'go': it is not just the devil who wants you to have a sense of inadequacy - God does too! But the devil's intention is to get you to give up all the time while it is God's intention to get you to trust Him and do all your work in His strength. Even Isaiah, of the powerful lips (speech), needed God's enabling and cleansing for effectiveness in service. The burning coal from the altar reminds us that the God who equips you is the God who forgives you, and the God who forgives you is the God who equips you. 'Go' with that and you have an arsenal at your disposal!

This article is adapted from the address given by  
Rev. Kenneth Stewart (Glasgow RPCS) at the Go Rally



## Nantes

30th March - 9th April

## Airdrie

4th-9th April

## Bailiesmills

18th-22nd June

## Faughan

23rd-28th June

## Glenmanus

23rd-30th June

## Galway

14th-21st July

## Sligo

22nd-29th July

## Cloughmills

5th-10th August

## Newry

11th-18th August

## Knockbracken

11th-18th August

## Convoy and Stranorlar

11th-18th August

## Enniskillen

25th-31st August

## Stranraer

1st September

For more details email  
Philip McCollum at  
psmccollum@gmail.com

# Training Men in Sudan



Africa is ripe for harvest, and South Sudan is no exception. In just a handful of years, the Lord has been pleased to abundantly bless the work of Cush4Christ, a mission of Reformed Presbyterian Global Missions (RPGM) in Aweil, South Sudan, and manifest the truth of Psalm 87, that there will indeed be many from Cush listed among those knowing the Lord!

At the heart of the mission is the training of national men for ministry. The earliest efforts of Cush4Christ revolved around this, and they still do. How vital it is for the Sudanese church that it have its own shepherds and teachers (Eph. 4)! Through the work of Pastor Andrew Stringer, who laboured in Sudan from 2007 to 2010, a two-year curriculum for church planters was developed. Six men have already completed the program, and close to a dozen more are currently studying. Pastor Vince Ward, whom the Lord used to bring about the vision for church planting in Sudan in the early 2000's, continues as the primary missionary overseeing the training of men. Currently Pastor Stringer is working from his home in Canada on writing a more advanced level of curriculum, that those men who have completed the first level might continue in their education.

The young pastors have a rapidly growing church with which to keep up. The presbytery, known locally as the 'Aweil Community Church,' (or Aweil Kanitha Baai, in the Dinka language) has six teaching elders, three ruling elders, three organised congregations, seven mission churches, and two fellowships. While the church planting efforts were heavily driven by the missionaries a few years ago, now it is the Dinka brothers who are burdened to see the truth of the gospel spread to communities where there is no light. The Spirit is very clearly preparing thirsty hearts to receive the Word, for even a number of communities have requested that churches be started among them.

It is a considerable challenge, among a people that is largely illiterate, to see a church grow in depth as well as breadth. Mid-week discipleship groups led by literate members are in their early stages; the concept is a new one and will take some time to be received. Outside of Lord's Day gatherings, the greatest tool by far has been the twice daily radio broadcasts by Weer Bei ('Redemption') FM, a radio station started by Cush4Christ. The programming, which includes Scripture readings and teaching among many other things, is prepared and presented by the Dinka pastors and students themselves. Broadcasting at a range of at least 100 kilometres, Weer Bei FM is a powerful means of sowing widely the seed of the Word, building up those new to the faith as well as evangelising thousands lost in darkness. Approximately 11,000 fix-tuned, solar-powered handheld radios have been distributed, most of which are shared by whole households as they tune in together in the mornings and evenings.

In a country where so many organisations minister in deed only, Cush4Christ labours under the conviction that ministry is to be in both word and deed. But rather than bringing in foreign funds or distributing food widely, which would be beyond the scope of the mission's ability and not sustainable from within, efforts have been concentrated on developing a strong diaconate, that the Dinka themselves might minister mercy to one another and recognise their own potential as image bearers of their Creator. Deacons have been ordained in three of the congregations, and in five others, potential candidates are working through the training curriculum. While the diaconate has been slower to develop than the eldership, the mission envisions a diaconate concerned with very practical needs such as basic hygiene and sanitation, medicinal plants, and improved agricultural practices. In January of this year, two of the teaching elders were trained by a dentist from the US in tooth extractions; in a place where there is virtually no dental care available, it is hoped that this skill ministered in the name of Christ will be a blessing to many.

The young church in South Sudan has been blessed with a multitude of covenant children. Recognising the grave importance of sharpening these arrows, Cush4Christ will be starting its first church-based primary school (grades K-2) in 2012 in the village of Parot. While most children in South Sudan who are fortunate enough to attend school are taught in a rote learning style, the Parot Christian School aims to develop critical thinking and a Christian worldview. Another means by which Cush4Christ seeks to impact the educational realm is by overseeing the establishment of discipleship groups in some of the local secondary schools. By training young hearts and minds in these formative years, the church in South Sudan will be built up to bear strong witness to a culture lost in darkness and to exert loving influence upon a people desperately needing Christian leadership.

Pray to the Lord of the harvest on behalf of this branch of Christ's church, that she would be equipped and built up to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13)!

by Natalie Faris

Read more about the RP Church of Southern Sudan at [www.cush4Christ.org](http://www.cush4Christ.org)



# 'Bringing Hope to Broken Lives'

## Church planting in Carrickfergus



It is eight years since the work of planting a Reformed Presbyterian Church in Carrickfergus began. Those years have been marked by different high points and a number of low points. The most recent high point has been the formation of a congregation in June 2011 and the election of Jonathan Heggarty, Ronnie Loughridge, and Jonathan Stewart to the eldership.

The congregation defines its mission as 'Bringing Hope to Broken Lives'. Our own lives have been broken by sin and its ugly effects and we need continually to be reminded of our hope in Christ so that we are being transformed increasingly into His likeness. And located in a Borough with over 30,000 residents, many of whose lives continue to be broken by sin and without hope of recovery, we seek to bring the hope of the Gospel to them in various ways.

We see the Church as a body with two arms- the arm of **teaching believers** and of **reaching unbelievers**. Each arm must be of equal length otherwise the great commission from Christ -to make disciples and to strengthen disciples - is not being pursued by us in a balanced way.

Like the Church in the Old Testament, like Christ, His Apostles, and the Church in the New Testament, we seek to achieve our mission through prayer and the ministry of the Word, to which we aspire to give ourselves continually with diligence and with delight.

**Teaching believers** and encouraging them in their faith is pursued through all the usual means, worship services, fellowship times, Bible Study, prayer meetings and by using our gifts in Christian service. We have Sabbath School, Women's Fellowship and Men's Fellowship Groups, and a Senior Covenanter Youth Group.

**To reach unbelievers** we encourage all our members to be at the heart of the local community. We believe that this is the most natural and effective way to bring the Gospel to people - to be alongside non-Christians - in community organisations, in school Parent Teacher Associations, in sports' clubs, in leisure and hobby activities, and in other ways. We are aware that our constant danger as Christians is of being so tied up in church meetings that we are not actu-

ally meeting non-Christians. So, as members we have made a conscious commitment to spend at least one hour in the week in some activity within the community.

The rest of this article will outline ten ways in which we seek to reach Carrickfergus with the Gospel, always keeping prayer and the ministry of the Word central in all that we do.

**Friday Night Club** meets as its name suggests on Friday evening. *Junior FNC* as it is known by the children, caters for children from Primary 3 - Primary 7 and runs in eight to ten week blocks for an hour, incorporating games, themed Bible teaching and a craft. On average 24 children attend. We encourage the children of the congregation to invite school friends, and we invited children of contacts in the community to attend.

*Senior FNC* caters for Secondary School pupils in years 8 - 13. It meets for 1½ hours also in eight to ten week blocks on a Friday evening and incorporates games, time for chit-chat over refreshments, and themed Bible teaching. Since September around 18 young people attend Senior FNC whereas previously the average attendance was 6 - 8. The recent increase in numbers has been due mainly to members of the Junior FNC moving up with some of them bringing their friends along.

Both clubs are a significant and serious attempt to bring the Gospel to children and young people. But that is not the only goal we have in mind for FNC. We see the clubs as important ways of making contact with parents and building bridges into families. In FNC our objective is to reach whole families. In the future we aim to visit every home of FNC children at least once a year, again with the desire to read the Scriptures and pray with families.

As part of the FNC programme we hold annually a summer Barbeque for all the family and recently we held a winter Craft and Book Fair. Both events have been well supported by parents. We hope to add a third family event at the end of the Spring session of Friday Night Club. Such events provide a good forum for showing love and friendship to parents. If possible we try to have a short 10 minute themed presentation of the Gospel.

**Coffee Stop** About two years ago, in order to develop our contact with parents dropping off children to FNC, we started Coffee Stop - offering tea, coffee and a chat whilst children attend the club. Church leaflets and Christian literature are available to be taken away. A number of parents regularly participate in this and through it we have had significant opportunities to share our faith and give Christian counsel. As a result of this ministry a number of parents regularly attend our monthly Guest Service.

**Champions' League:** Champions' League is a monthly outreach football event to teenage boys which includes a short talk based around some aspect or event in the football

world tied into a truth or verse of Scripture. The talk is concluded with prayer for the boys. This has been a most encouraging work. This year we had to split the group into Junior - a group of about ten boys and Senior a group of 20 boys. Such is the enthusiasm of the teenage boys who attend that they have developed their own Champions' League Facebook page.

**Girls' Zone** is a recent attempt to develop a similar monthly outreach event to teenage girls. The only difference is that the activity undertaken is much more genteel! This outreach is in its early days and small in numbers but so also was Champions' League at one point.

**Outreach Sabbath School** As part of the Sabbath School programme we have children from the community in two of the established classes, and then we have a third class that is dedicated to children from the community. Up to eight children from the community attend across these classes. The dedicated class is presently following the theme 'The life of Jesus - From conception to coronation'. At the close of Sabbath School all the classes come together to sing some Psalm portions and to learn the memory verse which is taken from the Children's Calendar that every child attending Sabbath School or FNC has received.

In January each year we present book awards to all the children who attend Sabbath School. Beforehand there

We have discovered that the success of all these outreach events rests on us having non-Christian friends which is not always our strong point as Christians. Given there are seven days in the week, we are encouraged both as men and women to have seven individuals/families who are not Christians for whom we pray weekly and with whom we are seeking to develop a friendship, so that when it comes to outreach events we have a pool of contacts that we can very naturally invite to attend.

**Monthly Guest Service** Each year we distribute approximately 2000 Gospel calendars in the Borough. On the second Sabbath of each month our evening service will focus on the text for that month. Beforehand flyers are produced for members to use to invite friends, family, contacts and parents of FNC or Sabbath School children. We also try to have any men's or women's outreach event the first week in the month prior to the monthly Guest Service. This enables us to invite those attending the event to come to the service. Approximately four to six non-Christians attend these services.

The format of the service is simpler and shorter, consisting of opening and closing Psalm, opening and closing prayer, Scripture Reading, and a simple 20 minute sermon. Afterwards refreshments are served and conversation carried on.

Champion's League



is a sit down meal and afterwards a games' evening. Again the entire family of community children and church children are invited and a short Gospel message and prayer will be an integral part of the evening.

**Women's and Men's Outreach.** For a number of years the ladies of the congregation have used their interest in craft, in food! in hobbies and other creative activities to invite their non-Christian friends to an outreach event. Usually someone will do a demonstration, there will be food to eat in different forms and a short Gospel message to conclude. Up to 15 women have come along and seemingly enjoyed the experience.

The men have learned from the ladies and now hold a number of themed outreach events for men - Dads' & Lads' Evening, 'Room to Race', and they plan in the future to hold an event around the annual Carrick Rugby Sevens Competition.

**Going for Gold** Each year we distribute an outreach and information leaflet to the 14,000 homes that make up the Borough. At an earlier stage we did this within a week using a Go Team. During this past year we have been doing this at three monthly intervals covering about 2,500 homes at a time. The current themed leaflet is 'Going for Gold' based around the Olympic Games, built around the words of Paul 'Run in such a way to get the prize. Everyone... competes in the games... to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last for ever.'

**One - to - one Bible Studies:** A number of members are involved in one to one Bible studies, some of these are with new Christians. One is with a non-Christian who a year ago came to our minister and said 'I would like to go to church but don't know anything about the Bible.' After a short series of one to one studies on 'The Bible for Beginners' which introduced this individual to the Bible, a study of Mark's Gospel was completed. Recently this person has



started attending Evening Service. We believe Christ is opening this person's heart and life to His grace as a flower opens slowly and surely to the summer sun.

**Community Visitation Team:** Some members assist our minister in visiting people from the community in their homes. These contacts have come about through door to door visitation, youth work, literature distribution, someone coming out to church, or through the recommendation of someone attending church services. The focus of Mr. Coulter's visit will be to read the Scriptures and pray in those homes with the desire that individuals will come to faith in Christ and whole families be reached. Members in their visits seek to show the love of Christ by word and in deed and to take opportunities for witness as they arise.

Much more could be said about church planting in Carrickfergus - both in terms of the challenges and opportunities. We are learning through our challenges and rejoicing in our opportunities to teach believers and to reach unbelievers based on a ministry of prayer and the Word that focuses on Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

To date we have not seen many conversions but the Lord is saving individuals and adding them to His Church. Though we 'have little strength' Christ our glorious Saviour and Sovereign Lord has set before us 'an open door, and no-one can shut it' (Revelation 3 v 8). Pray that we will have the grace, wisdom, strength and perseverance to go through the door He opens and that Christ will be pleased to save many so that the honour and the glory will belong TO HIM ALONE.

**Rev . Harry Coulter (Carrickfergus RPCI.)**

## Transylvania

by Rev. Andrew Kerr



Transylvania, a name derived from a Medieval Latin term meaning 'beyond the forest', is a region in Romania to the West of the Carpathian Mountains. Its history is long and complex. The heart of the Kingdom of Dacia at the time of Christ, it was later governed by Romans, Visigoths, Mongols, Magyars, Ottomans & Hapsburgs. Its recent story consists in a tug-of-war between Hungary and Romania to which the territory was finally reassigned in 1945. We should not however forget that it was, by God's grace, controlled by Calvinist Hungarian-speaking princes for a period from 1571.

The current population of Transylvania of over 7 million which has a large Romanian majority (76%), a sizeable Hungarian minority (20%) together with small Roma, German & Serbian communities, are concentrated in major urban centres like Cluj-Napoca (318,000), Timisoara (318,000) and Brasov (285,000). The major tourist attractions are Dracula's Castle in Bran, the Medieval cities of Alba-Iulia, Cluj and Sibiu (2007 European Capital of Culture), Targu Mures and Sighisoara (supposed birthplace of Dracula), together with (for interested future Go-Team members) the cafe culture and street theatre of Sibiu and Cluj and the Ski Resort of Poiana Brasov.

While most Transylvanian Romanians are from a Romanian Orthodox or Uniate background, its Hungarians lay claim to Roman Catholic, Calvinist, or Unitarian roots. For some time members of the RP Church have taken a keen interest in Eastern Europe. The Overseas Section were pleased to bring the suggestion of the Newtownards Session that Synod 2011 consider to possibility of Church Planting in the region. Following a warm response, Mr. Peti Bajko, applied to be received into the Autumn 2011 Theological College intake, with a view to future missionary calling to minister in Transylvania. We believe these events are the fruit of previous labours of Rev. Stephen Robinson.

A sub-committee, under the leadership of Rev. Knox Hyndman, has now been put in place to prepare the ground for a Transylvanian work. While modest financial outlay is envisaged, success under God will require sustained giving, prayerful support, sacrificial service and Gospel Vision on the part of God's People. To this end, can I urge both young and old not only to rededicate themselves to a renewed vision for the Mission of God in Ireland, Scotland & France, but, by the grace of God, for Christ's Crown and Covenant, to throw their weight behind this new venture in the name of King Jesus.



## MISSIONARY RALLY 2012

# 'Scotland: a mission field'

Wed. 13th June 2012, 7.30pm, Rathfriland RP Church

Main Speaker : Rev. Kenneth Stewart (Glasgow RPCS)



by Maria Blackwood

The LORD will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Isaiah 58:11

The LORD indeed guides, satisfies needs, and strengthens. Since the work in Geelong started in 1858, we've seen 3 other congregations grow up in Sunbury, McKinnon, and Frankston.

The Geelong congregation continues to grow under the faithful preaching of Rev. Andrew Stewart. Averages of 150 attend the morning worship service. The Session is encouraged by the number of children and young people in the church, and seeks to help parents bring up these covenant children in the ways of the LORD. In 2011 the church organised its third Geelong Bible Conference. With 145 attendees, it was an encouraging yet challenging weekend as Rev. Ted Donnelly of the RPCI preaching a series of sermons on "The Growing Church in the Book of Acts".

The Sunbury church was organised in 1981 and closed in 2006. Lynsey Blakston was the Minister of that church for many years.

The work in McKinnon has seen a lot of growth, physical and spiritual in recent years. It was organised in 1946. From 2006 it was pastored by Rev. Edwin Blackwood until 2008 when it and Frankston became separate congregations and Frankston was officially organised. Rev. Alastair McEwen then ministered part time while living primarily in Geelong. Two elders from the Geelong church have been appointed elders. Rev. Graeme Hart was called to be the full time pastor in late 2010. He and his family moved to McKinnon where he has been ministering since. The congregation has been greatly blessed by his ministry, and also by the Fisher family who moved from Geelong to McKinnon to help the church. McKinnon would love to see local elders raised up to minister alongside Graeme in the church. The McKinnon congregation hasn't had an evening service for many years. Graeme has started a fortnightly Sunday Night Focus where they are currently studying the 'Christ Files'.

The Frankston congregation was established in 1971, but closed in 1989. It was revived in 2004 as part of the McKinnon congregation. Rev. Edwin Blackwood had a dual

call and was preaching in McKinnon in the morning and Frankston in the evening. In February of 2008 it was organised as its own congregation, and Rev. Edwin Blackwood is the full time minister. The LORD has blessed this congregation with several youth and young children. When children's Bible school classes started in 2008 there was one class for the children. Since then it has grown to four separate classes for children age 3 - 19. God has, in His providence, raised up 4 men to be managers in the congregation, to help lessen the load on the 3 elders, which has been a blessing. The Frankston congregation has grown as Christian families have come into the church, but it is their prayer that unbelievers would be reached with the gospel, and that God would use the Frankston church to bring people to Him. The church is hoping to grow not only in numbers, but in unity of heart and mind, and also spiritually. The minister has started putting out a family worship guide "Worshipping Together" based from "Let's Worship God" (put out by the Airdrie RPC Scotland), which goes along with the evening sermon series, and a 3 year weekly Bible reading plan.

The RP church of Australia owns a campsite in the Yarra Valley in Victoria (1-2 hours from each of our congregations) where we have 4 presbytery wide camps a year and several working bees throughout the year - including a working bee camp once a year. The first camp is fellowship camp (March or April). This is our presbytery-wide family camp. We spend the long weekend worshipping together, sharing meals together, and we are encouraged and challenged in our walks with the Lord. The second camp is a Youth Camp (June) for high school and up. This is always a good turnout with a good number of youth attending. It is a challenging, yet encouraging time. The third camp is a Junior Camp (September) for children aged 8-12. The young ones always enjoy the few days spend in the bush, singing, eating, playing, and growing in the Lord. The fourth camp is a young adult camp over a weekend. Camp Committee has started up a working bee camp between Christmas and New Year as a time of hard work and enjoyable company.



The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Australia prays that we will continue to grow in our love for the LORD, for His church, and in our desire to reach the lost. We pray that we might be "like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail" to each other and those around us. To Christ be Glory in the Church.



## forms a new Central Presbytery

*The RPCNA has formed a Presbytery in another country. Due to the sensitive nature of the work that was done and is yet to be done, much has been left purposefully vague, but we have been provided with some information to help us in our praying for this new Presbytery.*

"The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad" (Psalm 126:3). Rejoice with us over the formation of the Central Presbytery of the RPCNA on January 3 of 2012. That name was chosen for its geographic anonymity and to reflect hopes that many future presbyteries will be formed to the north, south, east, and west!

The Central Presbytery begins with six congregations and two church plants, but 25 worship meeting locations. There are 653 communicant members with a minimum of 69 more baptised members (We are certain there are more but all the congregations could not give an exact count at the meeting of the Presbytery.). There are 1,120 worshippers under the spiritual supervision of five fully ordained pastors and sixteen ruling elders, most of whom are preaching regularly.

A number of other groups observed the organisational meeting and are considering the benefits and the strengths of such an association. It is the expectation that other groups would join this new presbytery or be formed into another presbytery. It was quite moving to observe many men in tears speaking of how God had worked marvellously in their midst and how at last they felt like they had a home. After the formation of the presbytery, the commissioners stayed within the country to visit other networks to teach and explain to them what God is doing.

Within minutes of becoming our newest presbytery, our brothers were "off & running" with a three hour meeting with minimal input from the commissioners. The next morning began with a service of thanksgiving recognising what God had done in their midst. The Commission received a precious gift from them signed by all the elders. The plan is to have two plaques made to commemorate the occasion and to deliver one to the Central Presbytery when the timing makes its feasible. Psalm 126 was the devotional text for the thanksgiving service. Please read it with our brothers in mind, surprised like those who say, "We must be dreaming!" their mouths filled with laughter, and their tongues with joyful shouting, because the LORD really has done great things for them (and for all of us as well). It is with a deep spirit of gratitude to Zion's King that we celebrate His work in our midst.

## Replanting in East Belfast

The city of Belfast comprises approximately half a million people and is ranked 14th largest in the United Kingdom. Sadly, amidst so many there are just a handful of reformed churches and only few congregations that proclaim the crowned rights of King Jesus.

In February 2012 the Eastern Presbytery agreed to commence a program with the purpose of replanting a congregation in the east of the city where the population is nearly 90,000.

Presbytery has set out a staged approach to reestablishing a work in the Woodstock/Cregagh Rd area. In the initial phase either the Cregagh Road meeting-house ground floor will be modified or other suitable accommodation found in the neighbourhood. When this preparatory stage is completed the second phase of community contact will commence. This initial outreach will be centred round midweek teaching and preaching activities. It is the prayer of Presbytery that during this second phase a number of people and families will commit themselves to form a core group. When this has been established it is the goal of

Presbytery to call a minister to further organize and develop the work.

Please pray for this project.

1. Pray that God would be glorified in all that is done.
2. Pray that sinners will be converted as the local community is reached.
3. Pray that a core group will quickly be established.
4. Pray that there would be sufficient resources for the plans.
5. Pray for wisdom for the steering committee of Presbytery.

The Latin inscription under Belfast's coat of arms reads, "Pro tanto quid retribuamus." The motto, which is taken from Psalm 116v12, translates as, 'What return shall we make for so much'. This expresses the reason for our plans for replanting in East Belfast. Since the Lord Jesus Christ has purchased for us so great a salvation, our response should be a life long sacrifice of thanksgiving in going and making disciples as He has commanded.

**Rev. David J. McCullough**  
(Convenor of Presbytery Steering Committee)