

British Isles North District Sunday School Ministries Report

20 March 2006

Dr Cunningham, Rev Wood, Delegates and Friends

It is with joy in my heart and a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to serve that I present this report on behalf of the British Isles North District Sunday School Ministries Board.

We have had three team meetings during the past year. I am grateful to our District Superintendent, Rev Colin Wood, for his wisdom, guidance and encouragement, and to many others who pray for, positively influence, and encourage me. While I feel the responsibility of chairing the meetings, endeavouring to keep to our mission of providing ministry that will be meaningful to the local church and individuals, it is encouraging to meet with other members of the Board who demonstrate a real sense of purpose and commitment. We appreciate the privilege of being trusted to serve and we welcome the way people support us and interact with us, giving us feedback and making suggestions; this really adds value to what we do.

I attended the 26th General Assembly held in June. The theme of the Assembly was 'Ablaze with Hope'. It was a privilege to share with others from around the world in the conventions, workshops, worship times and celebrations. I have already used resources and inspirational ideas from the General Assembly and I look forward to developing and sharing these further within the context of the British Isles.

The following individual reports summarise activities and events from the past year.

Sports - Jim Barclay

Eight teams from various local churches displayed their athletic abilities at the district sports held at Scotstoun Stadium on 7 May 05. Well done to Perth the overall champions. Participants had the chance to perform to the peak of their ability or to just compete for fun. There were some outstanding achievements and performances as well as enjoyable fellowship, with time to relax and have a cup of tea and refreshments. A Rally was held after the sports in the Hart Memorial church with a great time of united praise and worship and spiritual blessing.

Children' Quizzing - Jim Jeffrey

What a thrilling final was held for quizzing on 14 May 05 in Irvine with teams from Carrickfergus, Greenisland, Houston, Irvine and Twechar taking part. The knowledge displayed and the standard of quizzing was fantastic. The children were a credit to their coaches and churches.

First place in the final went to Houston followed closely by Greenisland and Irvine. The World Quiz Final was held in Indianapolis on 25th June 05 with over two thousand children taking part from across the USA and Canada and for the first time eighteen children from our district participated in the World Final on the same day in Irvine gaining 5 gold, 9 silver, and 2 bronze awards.

Mission Excellence Conference - Paul Wallace

Using dramatic visuals of flying missions, Justin Hughes, a former Red Arrow aerobatic pilot brought a unique perspective on leadership, teamwork, communication, and the importance of effective debriefing for continual improvement to our conference held in the Erskine Bridge Hotel on 28 May 05. Justin and his associate Jim Brearley, the Rev Ian Wills and Rev Philip McAlister

were the guest speakers. Ian's distinctive style in his interactive sessions reinforced the theme of teamwork and Philip related the leadership principles to the church context and challenged us to invest our lives, time, gifts and resources in God's Mission. Rev Colin Wood concluded the conference with a reminder about the cross of Jesus Christ and it's central theme in the Church's Mission. Over ninety-five delegates attended the conference from 23 local churches. This is how one participant summed up the event, "The whole conference was excellent, I was able to relate the presentations to both personal and church life, the context part was challenging and made me look again at my own commitment and input to Mission in our church and community".

Camp - Elizabeth Weir

Whithaugh Park on the Scottish Borders was the venue for the camp held from 4 - 9 July 2005 and attended by over forty children and twelve leaders. The outdoor activities included raft building, gorge walking, swimming and sports. There were times of daily devotion, these were really special and they helped the children to learn more about God and their daily walk with him. The spiritual lessons were taken from the Old Testament book of Esther and titled 'Haman the Hangman', and the 'Live and Loud' worship times gave great opportunity to worship and praise the Lord. The Camp provided a happy Christian environment for the children and we appreciate those who gave so much and did so much to make it success.

Women's Ministry - Rev Margaret Vosper

Two women's retreats were held this past year, one in N Ireland in June when forty women enjoyed fun and fellowship at the Glenada Conference Centre in Newcastle. The women gathered with a sense of excitement and expectancy. There was very positive feedback in terms of women feeling encouraged and desiring to go deeper with God. Then in November the second retreat was held at the Erskine Bridge Hotel in Scotland with forty-two women attending. The theme was becoming free to be the women God has called us to be. Many found the teachings from the Apostle Paul showing his concern for women and his equality texts very helpful in their own Christian walk. Again the sense of fun and fellowship added greatly to the enjoyment of the weekend and the sense of the Lord's presence in the Sunday morning service was very special.

Conclusion

This report captures in a measure the people focus of SS Ministries during the past year. We will endeavour to listen and where necessary fine tune these ministries, and continue them while they serve purpose and meet needs. However, we don't want to merely maintain the status quo we want to 'extend our boundaries', to live the expectation of Ephesians 3:20 (MSG) 'God can do anything.... far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his spirit deeply and gently within us'. As we look forward, a primary factor influencing our outlook will be our vision; it will give us the capacity to imagine the future God has for us instead of merely being bound to the past. My desire is to work with others to create ministry opportunities that will enable us to serve the purpose of God in our generation.



Respectfully submitted
Paul Wallace
Chairman