

A WORD ABOUT WORDS

Words are important. They are the currency of communication. We need words to help us reason and communicate, and for the Christian words are vital to understanding and expressing our faith.

Jesus, the Teacher *par excellence*, was a master-craftsman when it came to the use of words. His teaching, parables, and sermons, have challenged the greatest of minds and yet the "common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12:37). The Apostle Paul knew all about the importance of clear communication; he says he would rather speak five words that people could understand than ten thousand words in a language no one could understand (1 Cor. 14:19). The Apostle James gives the following advice, "...be quick to listen and slow to speak..." (James 1:19). Scripture has a lot to say about the use of words – their power, their value, and how they can be misused - and especially in the Book of Proverbs.

Words can hurt and wound; cruel and clumsy words can "pierce like a sword", yet words can also encourage and bless - "the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Proverbs 12:18). And whereas words can spread evil they can also bring forth good fruit – a scoundrel's speech "...is like a scorching fire" (16:27), but "a gentle tongue is a tree of life" (15:4).

Yes, words are important – our words should always be **honest** ("an honest answer is like a kiss on the lips," 24:26), **well chosen** ("when words are many, sin is not absent," 10:19), **measured** ("a man of knowledge uses words with restraint," 17:27), and **appropriate** ("a man finds joy in giving an apt reply," 15:23).

Words are important! As the Children's Chorus puts it, "Be careful little lips what you say...there's a Father up above and He's looking down in love, so be careful little lips what you say."

DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES The 71st Assemblies of the two British Isles districts were held over the weekend 8th-11th March in St John's, Dukinfield (South) and Perth Trinity (North) with Dr Carla D. Sunberg (General Superintendent) presiding. Highlights included a display and commemoration of 100 years of NYPS/NYI and, on the South district, the baptism of 5 young people and the welcoming of the "Good Shepherd Filipino Church" (Taunton) into the denomination. At the North assembly an ordination service was held when Rev Bev Fitzjohn was ordained – pictured (l.to r) Richard Wood (District Secretary), Rev Ruth Turner (District Superintendent), Rev Bev Fitzjohn (Cramlington – ordinand), Rev Rob Fitzjohn (Cramlington), Dr Carla D. Sunberg (General Superintendent).



CHURCH HOLIDAYS



BROOKLANDS CELEBRATES

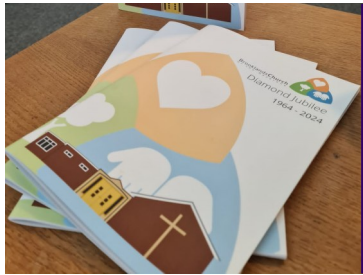


The Manchester Brooklands Church of the Nazarene celebrated 60 years as an organised church during the week 3rd-10th March. The week's activities included a testimony service, a visit from General

Superintendent, Dr Carla D. Sunberg, who preached, special events for men and ladies, and a whole church meal at Didsbury Golf Club with 120 attending.

A commemorative booklet has been published which captures the history of the church over the past 60 years. And long-standing member, Bill Graham (pictured with Dr Sunberg), was honoured with a Distinguished Service Award after stepping down from the Church Board after 54 years of service. The award was presented as part of the anniversary celebrations by Dr Carla D. Sunberg. The award's inscription honouring Bill Graham reads as follows, "Recognising 54 years of exemplary service on the Church Board. Your enduring commitment, leadership, and deep wisdom have been a source of inspiration to us all. We truly give thanks to the Lord for His grace in your life."

Rev Michael Kane (pictured) serves as pastor of the Brooklands church along with his chaplaincy and teaching responsibilities at Nazarene Theological College, Manchester.



NEWS FROM THE NORTH-EAST

It was in July 2017 that the newly formed ministry team at Cramlington prayed about a community outreach venture. The vision was to have a 'coffee shed' on the church grounds to serve the local Sunday footballers, who play nearby, and the community. Then Covid-19 happened and plans were put on hold until November 2022 when a member of the local congregation donated £5000 for the coffee shed. Other donations followed and the shed was purchased. In late/early 2022/2023 with the help of local labour – including Rev Rob Fitzjohn, Mostafa Gharehchaei, and Pastor Stewart MacPhail (who is a qualified electrician), the Shed - named the "Jubilee Shed" after the Queen's Jubilee in 2022 and to denote a place of celebration - became a reality.

Open at least twice a week, children enjoy a cold drink and biscuits on their way home from school, hot drinks are available for parents, and dog walkers drop by knowing there is a bowl of water for their dogs.

There is no charge for items served in the shed; a donation box is available.

A craft group called Krafty Kidz has been established which meets after school on a Thursday and is attended by around 25 young people. Rev Rob Fitzjohn says, "The plan is to open at least 5-times a week... we have had many blessings at the Shed which also serves those who come to enjoy the memorial garden and picnic area which we have created on the church property. We do hope to continue developing these ministries to help, support and love our community".

And just recently, on Sunday 24th March, the Cramlington church received 4 new members into the fellowship of the church. Pictured (l.to r.) David Marlor, Jo Brown (with baby Daniel), Mike Brown, Rev Bev Fitzjohn, Rev Rob Fitzjohn, Pastor Stewart MacPhail, Mostafa Gharehchaei, and Helen MacPhail (Board Member).



HAMILL ROOM

It was following the untimely passing of Rev David Hamill, 24th January 2021, age 57, that the Belfast 1st Church of the Nazarene decided to dedicate the Prayer and Bible Study room to the memory of their former pastor. Located at the centre of the church complex, the room was officially opened in February 2022 as part of a Service of Thanksgiving for David's life and ministry. Recently the room has been refurbished and this was completed last December. Although the room is primarily for Prayer and Bible Study, many other activities are held in it, including, Ladies Fellowship, NMI, Children's work, Board/Committee meetings, and as a hub for social occasions.





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GLOBAL THEOLOGY CONFERENCE – a report by Dr Peter Rae

NTC was visibly present at the fifth Nazarene Global Theology Conference – held in Pilar, Argentina, 4th-6th April - where some 250 participants from around 65 countries were present. Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the event was the diverse nature of the global conversation: all the proceedings took place in four languages, and seeing vigorous debate between representatives of all six regions of the church – whether in small groups, or on the main stage – was a great example of how to wrestle honestly with profound questions, yet discover how much we had in common.

The theme of the conference was 'In the Power of the Spirit', and the three days were shaped around three subthemes: The Holy Spirit; Holy People; Hope of New Creation. Of the 22 papers at the conference, 7 were presented by NTC faculty or alumni – with many other alumni engaged in the leading and shaping of the Conference. Dr Svetlana Khobnya (of NTC) started the conference with the first of the main papers: 'In the Power of the Spirit: Holy Spirit.'

The conference was the first to be hosted on the South America region, and the venue, the *Seminario Teológico Nazareno del Cono Sur*, gave the delegates the warmest of welcomes. Dr Jorge Julca, president of the seminary, said that he felt it was a landmark event for the region, showing it was fully recognised as a partner in the global Church. For those of us from the West, it was the vigour and enthusiasm of the Church of the Nazarene in the global south that was so refreshing. As Dr Deirdre Brower Latz commented, "the level of engagement by the global church outside the US was impressive: the Church shone."

What is the outcome of such a conference? Well, it is important to realise that this conversation is not designed to ratify a common statement or position, but (as one of the planning team put it) "to stir up the conversation, spice it up with different perspectives, and then send the participants back to their 65 countries and 6 regions to continue the conversation."

(Pictured are NTC faculty attending, along with NTC alumni).



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IN MEMORIAM

Remembering those who have served



The passing of **Dr Wesley Warren White** - in Kenya, 5th April, age 68 - is a great loss to the work of God's Kingdom. Wes had had successful colon surgery, but died in the days following the operation.

A DMin and PhD (University of Notre Dame, Indiana, USA)

graduate, Wes was a member of the Glasgow East Nazarene ministry team, a visiting lecturer at Nazarene Theological College, a former faculty member of International Christian College, Glasgow, the leader of the "Upper Room" fellowship for refugees in Glasgow, and part of the Forge Scotland ministry.

A great crowd attended a Thanksgiving Service in Glasgow on Saturday, 20th April with many taking part including Rev Shelley Kenny (Glasgow East Nazarene) and Dr Deirdre Brower Latz (Principal: NTC). Married to Cindy, the Whites have 5 children.



Rev Leslie Newton passed away 1st May, age 99. Originally from Morley, Leslie Newton was one of the first students at Hurler Nazarene College when the college opened in 1944.

He was ordained 16th April 1949 along with Dr Hugh Rae and Rev Alfred S. Milliken by Dr Hardy C. Powers (General Superintendent) at the Parkhead, Glasgow, Church.

After ministry in the Church of the Nazarene he became a Congregational Minister in Glasgow and in retirement worshipped in a Church of Scotland near his home on the South side of Glasgow.

(The picture of Rev Leslie Newton with Dr Peter Rae (left) was taken in 2019).

CHURCH NEWS

LEEDS HUNSLET ANNIVERSARY



The Hunslet Church of the Nazarene celebrated its 120th Anniversary on 6th-7th April. Approximately 80 attended the Saturday tea and concert which included the Lord Mayor of Leeds and other dignitaries, as well as former members, friends from the local community, and representatives from the Dewsbury and Keighley Nazarene churches.



The Clifton Hand-bell Ringers performed at the concert on the Saturday and Rev Clive Burrows (former District Superintendent) was the speaker for the weekend.



It was in April 1904 that 4 local laymen in Hunslet felt the burden for the local community and started the Plevna Ragged Sunday School, which became the Derbyshire Street Sunday School and Mission. (Steve Leach - South District Advisory Board Secretary - is the great-grandson of one of the 4).

The independent mission established close links with the IHM (International Holiness Mission) and in 1953 joined the Church of the Nazarene and became the Hunslet Church of the Nazarene. Early pastors included Rev Peter C. Ferguson and Rev Frank Webster.

God has blessed the work over the years and the work goes on. Although a small fellowship, the church is active in ministry in the community - in care homes, at Remembrance Services and is involved in local tenants' and residents' associations. Pastor Mike Hewison has served faithfully as Church Secretary for 40 years and for the past 10 years as part of the ministry team along with Pastor Terry Martin.

GREYSTONES VISIT

Rev Antonie Holleman (Netherlands - North Europe Field Strategy Coordinator) and Dr Ian Wills (Perth - Nazarene Ireland Director) visited the Greystones Community Church of the Nazarene, Ireland, over the weekend 11th-12th May.

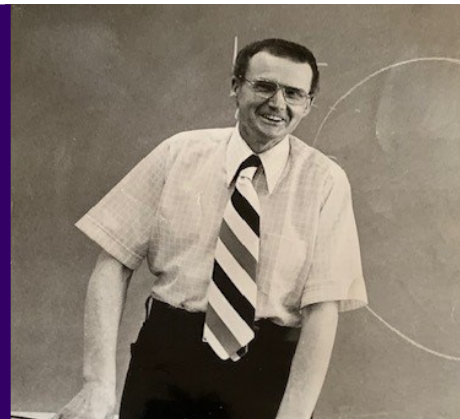


It was in the late 1950s that Nazarene work began in Dublin with Rev Leslie Roberts and Rev Glynn Thomas as the first pastors, but in spite of early success and blessing declining numbers were to make the work unviable. In 1987 Rev Harry & Grace Stevenson - who were Nazarene missionaries in South America, and former members of the Dublin Nazarene church - were appointed to reestablish our work in Ireland. Greystones, Co Wicklow, was the chosen location and the Stevensons were soon ministering to over 50 people with 95 children attending. Services were held in the local YWCA. Eventually land was purchased and the present church was built.



After 22 years in the present building, the need to refurbish and extend has become urgent and the church is working on a plan to remodel and extend the existing building to provide a coffee shop/café space, a flexible auditorium, and a suite of rooms for both church and community use. The connection with the local community and community groups continues to be an area of real blessing and encouragement. The new facilities will also enable the church to develop an Early Learning Centre which will provide much needed pre-school places for the growing town. Currently between 70 and 100 adults and children meet on a Sunday - the church has had real growth in young families and children.

Pictured are the denominational visitors along with the local ministry team and their families (l to r back row) Rev Antonie Holleman, (FSC), Rev Tim Bowen-Evans (Staff Team Member). Kate Bowen-Evans, Pastor Molly Morton (Staff Team Member), Rev Luke Carrig (Staff Team Lead), Kelsey Carrig, Carolyn Wills, Dr Ian Wills (Nazarene Ireland Director).



SERMONS PUBLISHED

It was on 18th August 1996 that Dr T. Crichton Mitchell passed away, age 80. Tom Mitchell was a pastor, preacher, teacher, author, and Wesley scholar. After pastorates in Paisley, Bolton, and London, he lectured in Nazarene Colleges in Switzerland, Manchester and in the USA (Colorado Springs). Recently his son-in-law, Dr Brent A. Pitts (USA), has been collecting and editing Tom Mitchell's sermons and already volumes 1-7 of "Collected Sermons of Thomas Crichton Mitchell" are available for purchase from the lulu.com bookstore. Pictured is an old photograph of Dr Mitchell teaching in Nazarene Bible College, Colorado Springs, USA.