

July / August 2025

THE bulletin

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given
to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations"

Matthew 28:18-19

Photo by Christopher Sardegna on Unsplash

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Dear Friends,

As we head into the summer months I had originally intended to write an upbeat introduction to this bulletin highlighting all the reasons why I am thankful as we come to the end of another session of worship, work and witness in RSPC. But I have found myself unable to complete that in light of what has happened in our nation. Last week the House of Commons voted to decriminalise abortion and legalise state assisted suicide confirming that the majority of our MPs have lost any sense of right and wrong. Although these votes related to legislation for England and Wales, this ongoing assault on the Christian foundations of our society will, I believe, prove to be catastrophic for the United Kingdom.

At the weekend I read Rev David Robertson's reaction to this on his blog [TheWeeFlea.com](https://www.theweeflea.com) – [The Blog of David Robertson](https://www.theweeflea.com)

Since David has expressed it better than I can, you can read his thoughts below.

The Quiet Judgement on the UK

‘And so, it has happened. It came - not as a bolt of lightning. Not as a flash of thunder. Not with a mighty roar like an earthquake. It did not come in the form of war, plague and famine. It came as the pale horse whose rider was named Death (Revelation 6:8).



Photo by Marcin Nowak on Unsplash

The judgement of God has finally come upon the United Kingdom. Quietly, silently, like a thief in the night. It came in the form of an irrational, emotive and Godless parliament who this week voted

to permit the killing of babies in the womb up until birth, and has now introduced the National Suicide Service, with its vote to permit assisted suicide. God has given us what we voted for.

God's anger against sin can be seen in different ways, and for different purposes. Sometimes he acts directly - to correct and rebuke. Sometimes he gives us our just desserts. But the worst kind of punishment is that inflicted on the UK this past week. His greatest punishment is to give us what we say we want - autonomy. He lets us have it our way and in the name of choice, we limit life. In the name of freedom we bind the poor, the sick and the disabled. In the name of humanity, we kill humans.

Paul told the Romans about this wrath of God. It "is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness". (Romans 1:18) It's not as if we don't know about God - he has made it plain to us. We have the glory of his creation - and for centuries we have had the teaching of his word.

It was that teaching upon which our society was based - with its values of equality, diversity, freedom and justice for all. But now that has all gone. Words are used, but they have no more meaning. Indeed, such is the perversity of our leaders that if the words have any meaning at all – they are the opposite of what was intended. Life has become death. Freedom has become slavery. And compassion has become cruelty. The truth of God has been exchanged for a lie. We have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity (Romans 1:18-32).

Pagan Rejoicing

When the vote for assisted suicide (falsely called 'assisted dying' - it is not assisted dying, it is assisted suicide and therefore State-sponsored killing), the pagans rejoiced. Has anyone noticed how

the self-styled humanists seem to have such a love affair with death? They danced, chanted and shouted for joy as though they had just won an election. And maybe they had? Their death cult has become triumphant - it is now the official doctrine of the State.

Another evidence of this cult of death and its twin, the cheapness of life, is the growth of what are termed 'direct cremations.' Twenty per cent of funerals last year in the UK were direct cremations - that is, the body is cremated cheaply with no ceremony and no attendees. It's much cheaper than a funeral and it's a lot less bother.

Psychologically it allows families to just move on without having to think of the physicality or reality of death. There is no closure. I cannot help but think that such a cheap death reflects a cheap view of life. We are becoming a shallow, sick and sinful society. Dostoevsky argued those who wanted a truly great heart would experience suffering. We know better. We won't permit suffering, so we will know nothing but superficiality - and ultimately even greater suffering.

The Line Crossed

And do not think that this is the end. It won't stop there. The humanists have other Christian doctrines - and more humans - to kill. In the name of 'compassion, equality and humanity' there will be further additions - we will soon get to a point when euthanasia for the non-terminally ill will be permitted, when infanticide (post-birth abortion) will be legal, when involuntary euthanasia will be used to remove those unproductive elements of society who are only a burden on the economy. Mammon must have its sacrifices. Babylon must be fed. We will cut support for the disabled and justify their killing in the name of mercy.

C.S. Lewis warned us about this. It is the logical outcome of a

philosophy of naturalism that denies the existence of the God who brings justice, beauty and love. He stated in his book *Miracles* that “Nature can only raid reason to kill”. What he meant by that was that it is natural to kill, and reasonable to save life. Have you noticed how the humanists want humans to be treated like dogs? After all they argue, if we can put down dogs then why not human beings?

Rationality has been thrown out of the window. We call the killing of thousands in the war in Gaza ‘genocide’, but the killing of 250,000 human beings every year in the UK through abortion ‘reproductive rights!’ Within a decade I suspect that the second highest reason for death in the UK (the first being abortion) will be the National Suicide Service. The State will be the greatest killer of its own people. The State will become the Pale Rider.

The Death Cult

The death cult that has gripped the UK is an inevitable result of the rejection of our Christian roots. As Dostoevsky argued in *The Brothers Karamazov*, “if there is no God, all things are permitted.”

Euthanasia has been held back in the West until now, at least partly because of its association with Nazism and Hitler. But now we have made history as well as language meaningless, the brakes are off. Hitler would have thoroughly approved of this week’s votes. As his secretary Traudl Junge testified in her book, *Until the Final Hour*:

“He was not a member of any church, and thought the Christian religions were out-dated, hypocritical institutions that lured people into them. The laws of nature were his religion. He could reconcile his dogma of violence better with nature than with the Christian doctrine of loving your neighbour and your enemy. ‘Science isn’t yet clear about the origins of humanity,’ he once said. ‘We are probably the highest stage of development of some mammal

which developed from reptiles and moved on to human beings, perhaps by way of the apes. We are a part of creation and children of nature, and the same laws apply to us as to all living creatures. And in nature the law of the struggle for survival has reigned from the first. Everything incapable of life, everything weak is eliminated. Only mankind and above all the church have made it their aim to keep alive the weak, those unfit to live, and people of an inferior kind.”

Christian Response

As for the old religion - the Christianity upon which the UK was founded - most of its leaders were silent. The Catholic Church spoke out with clarity - as did a number of evangelical and Reformed churches. But the so-called national churches were either silent or whispered so quietly that only the few who attend them could hear.

For example, the Church of Scotland this week trumpeted its support for the Scotland Demands Better campaign - a worthy campaign against poverty. But not one word about the two important votes on abortion and assisted suicide - both vital subjects for the poor, who are far more likely to be adversely affected than the rich and powerful. The Church of England expressed regret. Some evangelicals said that while assisted suicide wasn't nice, we should not use strong and emotive language like calling it evil. Others wept and cried in frustration.

And Jesus wept

“And the Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.” (Genesis 6:6).

And the Pale Rider rode on - but he is not alone. Hades was following close behind him (Revelation 6:8). The death cult has only begun its work in broken Britain. There will be Hell to pay.

But it is not the end: “Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:14-15).

But that is not the end either. “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and first earth had passed away... and I saw that God’s dwelling place was with his people and there was no more death or crying or pain, for the old order of things had passed away” (Revelation 21:1-4).

“And I saw the river of the water of life, and the tree whose leaves were for the healing of the nations...” (Revelation 22:1-2).

“And I heard the Spirit say come. And I heard the Bride say come. And let everyone who wishes take the free gift of the water of life. And I heard Jesus say, ‘I am coming soon’” (Revelation 22:17).

Then it is the End. The end of the beginning. And the beginning of the endless glory.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.



David Robertson is minister of Scots Kirk in Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia. He blogs at the Wee Flea.

Yours in His service,

Michael Davidson

The May Link Gift Day

In my last Pastoral Letter I set before you the challenge for the May Gift Day for the Link Redevelopment. It was a high target - £42,000. I wrote, "I hope that in the next edition of the Bulletin I will once again be able to thank God for answered prayer through the generous giving of His people."



I am very thankful to report that not only was that target met but it was exceeded by several thousand pounds and the total came to almost £48,000. This means we have been able to pay the final bill to Lowry Construction and we are also in a position to continue to meet our monthly loan repayments through the rest of 2025.

I want to thank you for the generous, and in some cases, sacrificial nature of your giving.

Michael

Michael & Heidi's Holidays

Michael:

13th July - 4th August

Heidi:

17th - 31st August

Please contact our Clerk of Session Stephen Johnston if you need the services of a minister during this time.

Baptisms

Adult Baptism: David Arneill - 1st June 2025

Infant Baptism: Casper Winston Charles Dobbin - 8th June 2025. Son of Judith and Mark Dobbin

New Communicants Profession of Faith

1st June 2025

David Arneill

Rachel Bethel

Stephen Davidson

Niamh Johnston

Mark Johnston

Daniel McGucken

Peter Milligan

Callum Patterson

22nd June 2025

Michael Francis

Megan Francis

Transfer of members by Disjunction Certificate

1st June 2025

Colin & Janice Croft – transferring to Railway Street from the congregation of Maze

SUNDAYS IN JULY

Mornings: Summer in the Psalms - 'Behold our God'

Evenings at 7pm: See below and page 13 for more details

6th July

10:30am Psalm 91 'Our God Saves' Michael Davidson
No Evening Service

13th July

10:30am Psalm 92 'Our God Is Good' Michael Davidson
7.00pm Sunday Evening Informal Fellowship in the Link

20th July

10:30am Psalm 93 'Our God Reigns' Stephen Johnston
No Evening Service

27th July

10:30am Psalm 94 'Our God Cares' Philipp Jaeschke
7.00pm Sunday Evening Praise in the Link



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



Telephone Line Service
028 9244 8979

SUNDAYS IN AUGUST

Mornings: Summer in the Psalms - 'Behold our God'

Evenings at 7pm: See below and page 13 for more details

3rd August

10:30am Psalm 95 'Worship Our God' Peter Todd

7.00pm Sunday Evening Informal Fellowship in the Link

10th August

10:30am Psalm 96 'Our God Is Sovereign' Michael Davidson
No Evening Service

17th August

10:30am Psalm 97 'Our God Rules' Michael Davidson

7.00pm Sunday Evening Praise in the Link

24th August

10:30am Psalm 98 'Our God Is Saviour, King & Judge'
Michael Davidson
No Evening Service

31st August

10:30am Psalm 99 'Our God Is Exalted' Michael Davidson

7.00pm Sunday Evening Informal Fellowship in the Link



Watch online at
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Evening Services

As many members of our congregation will be aware Kirk Session discussed the viability of continuing to hold a weekly evening service at our meeting in November 2024. We agreed that we would keep this subject under review and as a result we had another good natured, full and frank discussion at our last Kirk Session meeting in May.

It was with regret that the elders agreed that a weekly evening service was no longer sustainable and as a result these have ceased, with the last service being on 1st June.

Kirk Session members are very conscious that this decision comes as a disappointment to all those who have faithfully supported our evening services but sadly with the number attending continuing to reduce the time had come when this difficult decision had to be taken.

It is worth noting that, of the other Presbyterian churches in Lisburn, only Sloan Street and ourselves restarted weekly evening services after Covid. Of the others, Elmwood meet twice a month, Hillhall once a month and 1st Lisburn, St Columba's and Harmony Hill have no evening services.

Our Kirk Session has agreed the following for the remainder of this year:

- Summer praise times will take place in the Link on Sunday 27th of July and 17th August at 7pm.
- A traditional style evening service will be held in the Meeting House on the first Sunday of the month from September to December.
- There will be a Praise service in the Link on the third Sundays in September and November with the Summer Youth Report Service held in the Link on the third Sunday of October. The annual Service of Lessons and Carols will be held in the Meeting House on the third Sunday evening in December.

Kirk Session will then review the position and determine the way forward for evening services at our stated meeting in January 2026.

Stephen Johnston, Session Clerk

Sunday Evening Praise

There will be two evenings of praise in The Link over the summer months:

**27 July and
17 August**

**Please note the
starting time - 7pm**

Births

It is with delight that we announce the birth of **Martha Elizabeth Sands**, daughter of Peter and Emily Sands, on 15 June 2025



Sunday Evening Fellowship

As well as the Praise Evenings, The Link will be open from 7pm on three other Sundays for a time of informal fellowship - hearing from some church members, a short time of singing, maybe a quiz or two.... and of course, all the tea and coffee you can drink!

If you're free on

**Sunday 13 July, 3 August
or 31 August from 7pm**

you'll be made very welcome.

'Let us encourage one another'

Prayer Focus

Luke 11:1 “Lord, teach us to pray.”

The school year has come to an end and the ‘long holidays’ have begun. Families will be looking forward to well earned breaks from work, a time to rest and a time for renewal.

It’s at such times that we need to gather for prayer. Numbers can be small during these months so, if you are available, we invite you to join us for Prayer Focus on one or both of these dates.

**Monday 21 July &
Monday 18 August
from 8-9pm in The Link**

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‘Out for Tea’ at Dobbies

**Thursday 7 August 2025
2.30pm**

Cost £6.50 per head to include
tea/coffee and scone

Please ensure that you have given
your name to any member of
committee if you wish to attend

Finance update

Ahead of the recent Gift Day for the Link Development Appeal, a final bill from the contractor of £39,000 was still outstanding and a big ask was made of the congregation in order to clear this amount: Again, the response was overwhelming with the total (including Gift Aid claims) standing at an incredible almost £48,000 to date. I am pleased to report that all the bills for the Link have now been paid putting the Property Account in a more healthy position as we continue to pay off the Loan. We are very grateful to all those whose offering increased and also to those who maybe gave for the first time in order to meet this need.



Given that the main spend on the Property Account would now be the monthly repayment to the loan (currently at £6,094 monthly), we are in a position to meet the maintenance and repairs spend on general property from regular giving into the property account; as would have been the case prior to building the new Link.

On the main No1 Account, continuing inflation on expenditure as well as the recent increase in National Insurance Contributions imposed on our salaried staff means Free Will Offering needs to increase similarly. At the start of 2025, I suggested that a £4 per month increase from each of our families would be required to balance the books and generate sufficient income to cover the spend. At the midpoint of the financial year, the FWO is almost identical to where we were this time last year and is likely to result in a small in year deficit without any upturn in the second half of the year.

Overall, “Electronic” regular giving continues to increase as the number of envelopes issued each year reduces. Bank details have been included in previous bulletins but can be obtained from myself or any of the ‘Finance’ team if required.

Many Thanks
Gordon Wallace, Treasurer

Lisburn Ladies Football Club chaplaincy

It is almost 2 years since I took up a role with Lisburn Ladies Football team as their sports chaplain. The club trains at The Bluebell stadium in Ballymacash and has around 100 girls age 4 and up. Our senior team play in the NI Women's Premiership and are a super group of girls. My role of chaplain mainly requires me to faithfully show up for the girls. It is very much about building relationships so that, if and when the girls or coaches need support, there is someone there to show God's love.



Many of them have had no contact with church and don't really know what Christianity is about so it is a privilege to be invited in and walk with them through some of the challenges they face. This year we lost a much loved coach to cancer; it was a difficult time but God was in the midst of it bringing comfort and reassurance to his family. A highlight was bringing around 20 of our seniors to a 'Made for More' event in Railway Street coffee bar - we had a great evening, lots of fun and some valuable conversations. For some it was their first time in a church building and they were amazed at the warm welcome and lovely desserts provided by our meals ministry team served by Jess and Anna.

I am so grateful for so many of you who pray for me and ask after the girls. There is never a week that I don't feel out of my depth driving up to the ground, but I know people are praying for me and the girls. Please pray that I will have the courage to speak boldly and that opportunities to talk about Jesus will continue to open up. I would love to be able to invite the club to an Alpha course in the Autumn - please pray that an opportunity for this will arise.

Lois Curragh

BB Leadership Opportunity

We are deeply thankful to God for the dedicated team of leaders who faithfully give their time to serve Him through our Boys' Brigade company.

As we look ahead, the Junior Section is now seeking new leaders who would be willing to serve on Tuesday nights from 7:15-8:30pm.

This is a vital stage in the boys' lives as they finish primary school and begin to grasp how God's Word speaks into everyday life. If you would be willing to help in this important ministry and advance Christ's kingdom, please speak to David Cleland or Hannah Craig.



KESWICK AT PORTSTEWART

SENT

05-11 JULY 2025

Sam Alberry

Rick Hill

Chris Wright

Dai Hankey

SUMMER MISSION INFO & PRAYER POINTS

15 OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUNG ADULTS ARE SERVING ON SUMMER MISSION TEAM & CAMPS THIS SUMMER.

IN LINE WITH PAUL'S REQUEST TO THE CHRISTIANS IN ROME TO PRAY FOR HIM IN HIS MINISTRY WE ASK THE CHURCH FAMILY IN RAILWAY STREET TO REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR THOSE GOING OUT THIS SUMMER TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST.

2 - 6 JUNE SU IMPACT TEAM, MILBURN, COLERAINE

The first of those serving has already returned.

Emily Davidson was a member of the Scripture Union Impact Team at Millburn in Milburn, Coleraine from 2nd-6th June. She asks that we:

- Pray for the children who received Bibles during the week as we were able to give out 50! Pray that they would continue to read those and grow closer to God through his word
- Pray for all those children in the Millburn community, that they will remember what they heard and that their relationships with God will continue to grow. Pray they would come back again next year
- Pray for the preparations for next year. Pray for a team to come together. Pray that they will receive a big number of children and teens who are eager to hear and ask questions about God.



30 JUNE – 13 JULY EXODUS LAUNCH TEAM, ROMANIA

**Daniel Nelson, Jessica Nelson, Max Spence,
Callum Patterson & Andrew Johnston**

- Pray that teams will arrive safely to the Exodus Centre and safely onto their placement destination
- That our team and Exodus Centre team will be able to make team members feel welcome and settle any nerves/homesickness
- Good weather to allow us to run planned programme.
- The Holy Spirit will help us communicate messages from the Bible we have prepared and the teams will learn, grow closer to God and each other
- For openness among the teams during discussions with us and team times
- For energy and rest as we need it for us as a team and the Exodus Centre team as we lead three launches.



6 – 13 JULY PORTSTEWART CSSM

Abigail Menown

Portstewart CSSM (6th - 13th July),
Christians in Sport (27th July - 1st August),
New Horizon Livewire (2nd - 8th August)



11 – 21 JULY EXODUS TEAM, HUNGARY

Emma McCleary

The team will be running both an English camp and a Christian English camp for the kids.

- Pray that both camps would run smoothly and kids and the team can grow in their faith
- Pray that the team would be able to spiritually impact the kids
- Pray for travelling safely and being safe and healthy during our trip and that we can cope with the language barrier.



14 – 18 JULY CASTLEROCK CSSM

Ben McCleary

- Pray for good attendance from the children and young people
- I will be working with the teenagers. Pray that they will respond well to the messages and that God will guide conversations.



17 – 28 JULY LEADING EXODUS TEAM, SALOU

David Wallace

- Pray for the new youth group being set up in Salou as part of Exodus España
- Pray for the team as they go and for the final prep that needs done before we head out.



17 – 28 JULY EXODUS TEAM, SPAIN

Ella Cassidy & Alannah Houston

- Pray that the team's travelling goes smoothly and we all arrive safely
- Pray the outreach goes well and that people hear the word of God clearly
- Pray for the kids clubs – that the children learn more about God and really benefit spiritually from us while we are there.



2 – 8 AUGUST NEW HORIZON ON THE EDGE

Hannah Craig

- Give thanks for the work and mission of New Horizon in pointing people to Jesus
- Give thanks for a great team who are eager to serve the Lord
- Pray for the work of On The Edge (the section for those in school years 8-11). Pray that God would be glorified and teenagers led to know and love Him more
- Pray that as we look at the true story of Joseph that we would see how it points us to Jesus
- Pray for Hannah as she leads the team to do so with gentleness and grace, and in the strength of the Lord.



2 – 7 AUGUST MULLARTOWN KIDS CAMP

Joanna Davidson

- For the children who are coming to camp: That God would soften their hearts on the run up to camp for what they will hear and learn during their time at Mullartown
- For the week: That it will run smoothly, for good weather and that the gospel would be faithfully proclaimed
- For the leaders: For team bonding and for any first time leaders as they settle into their role.



3 – 8 AUGUST CHRISTIANS IN SPORT

Ben Nelson – Hockey coach

- Pray for the children to have energy and to be engaged in the water break talks where we share our faith and talk about faith and sport.



11 – 15 AUGUST SUNI FINAGHY CROSSROADS

Jessica Nelson

- Unity as four main churches in Finaghy come together
- Leaders will be able to clearly communicate the gospel to children from 4-17 years of age
- Community of Finaghy will be impacted by the love of Jesus
- Non church parents/families will be more open and willing to attend a local church
- Strong relationships will be built between leaders and children
- Churches ministries including children and youth ministries will be blessed and children who go to Crossroads will link in with a ministry or church.



What's happening?

SUNDAYS AT RAILWAY STREET

MORNING SERVICE 10.30am (live streamed)

BEGINNERS - No. 31

KIDS - Upper Room

JUNIOR YOUTH - Minor Hall

EVENING SERVICE 6.30pm (1st Sunday of the month)

SENIOR YOUTH - Upper Room, 6.30pm-8pm

BOYS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Monday - Company Section 7.30pm-9pm

Tuesday - Anchor Boy Section 6.30pm-7.30pm &

Junior Section 7.15pm-8.30pm

GIRLS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Thursdays: Tiny Tots & Explorers - 6pm-7pm

Juniors, Seniors & Brigaders - 7.30pm-9pm

PRAYER FOCUS

3rd Monday of each month 8pm-9pm in the Link

BIBLE DISCOVERY (Sept - April)

1st & 3rd Thursday each month at 10.45am - Minor Hall

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS (Sept - June)

Tues & Wed bi-monthly 8pm-9.30pm in various homes

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (Sept - June)

4th Monday of each month at 8pm - Minor Hall

422 (Sept - June)

4th Thursday of each month at 2.30pm - Minor Hall

THE LINK UP

Every Wednesday 10am - 12noon in the Link