

March / April 2025

# THE bulletin

“He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.  
Come and see the place where he lay.”

Matthew 28:6

Photo by Pisit Heng on Unsplash

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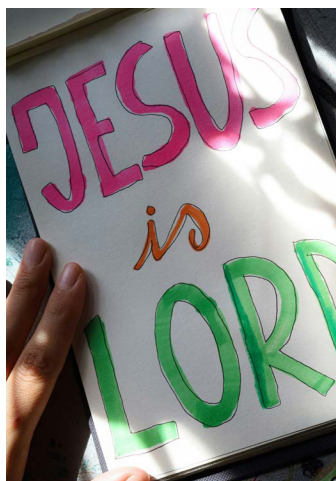
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# Three Words That Mean The Difference Between Life and Death

I have been thinking recently about the three words that mean the difference between life and death. I wonder do you know what they are?

Let me give you a clue - they come from the earliest Christian Confession. Do you know what the oldest or the earliest Christian Confession is?

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The earliest Christian Confession goes back to the New Testament and is just three words - 'Jesus is Lord.' This confession is found throughout the New Testament in places such as 1 Corinthians 12:3 "Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

We saw it most recently in our studies in Romans - chapter 10 verse 9, "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

In making this confession the early Christians said a great deal about the identity of Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament God revealed himself to Moses using a name containing 4 Hebrew letters, equivalent to YHWH in English. It is normally rendered as Yahweh - the name for the covenant God of Israel. This name in the Old Testament is translated into English as LORD with small capital letters. When the Hebrew of the Old Testament was translated into Greek nearly all the occurrences of Yahweh, over

6000 of them, were rendered with the Greek word for Lord - kurios. So to say Jesus is Lord is not just to call Jesus Master it is to affirm that he is fully and completely God. 'Jesus is Lord' - these three words are literally the difference between life and death for only those who confess, 'Jesus is Lord' will be saved.

As we have seen in Romans this was where the Jews who rejected the Gospel fell - the majority of them could not bring themselves to confess that, 'Jesus is Lord,' - that he was God come in human flesh. Instead they continued to try and earn their salvation through their futile attempts to obey the Law. Their failure to acknowledge Jesus as Lord saw them fail to receive salvation and it led to death and judgement.

Yet for both those Jews who did accept Jesus and those Gentiles who responded to the Gospel, to affirm 'Jesus is Lord' led to salvation and eternal life.

But for both Jewish and Gentile believers in 1st century Rome to say, 'Jesus is Lord' increasingly became a matter of life and death for as we saw in our studies in the early chapters of Revelation this was a courageous and dangerous

confession of faith at a time when the Roman emperors declared themselves to be Lord and demanded that all their subjects acknowledge that. This the Christians would not do. This was seen as treason against the emperor and for many of them persecution and martyrdom became the cost of saying, 'Jesus is Lord.'



Photo by David Kohler on Unsplash

That continues to be the case in 2025. These three words are still the difference between life and death. To stand up today in North Korea or Iran or Somalia and many other countries on the <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/> and to affirm Jesus is Lord brings a heavy cost. It still brings persecution, imprisonment or death.

Muslims believe God is one and has no son - Jesus is no more than a prophet but subservient to the one they call Mohammed.

For totalitarian rulers like Kim Jung Un in North Korea you must acknowledge him and his father and grandfather as Lord.

Photo by Andrea de Santis on Unsplash



Many of our brothers and sisters are paying the price of that simple confession, 'Jesus is Lord' and we need to continue to uphold and support them in prayer.

But increasingly in our own society to say, 'Jesus is Lord' carries a cost. A few weeks ago we heard from Callum Webster the NI Rep for The Christian Institute (<https://www.christian.org.uk/>) about how our religious liberties are under increasing threat in the UK today. To say, 'Jesus is Lord' and to remain faithful to the truth of the scriptures which he inspired will increasingly find us on the wrong side of our secular 'progressive' rulers and society.

Can you say that 'Jesus is Lord?' and are you prepared to pay the price that can come with that confession of faith? Are we prepared to stand with and support those for whom that confession costs the most?

This Easter we will once again hold our Easter Services and reflect on the events that prove Jesus is Lord - his death for our sins on the cross and his glorious resurrection on that first Easter morning.



I hope you will join with us and I pray that it would be the case that there might be those who make that confession, 'Jesus is Lord' for the first time.

These are three of the most important words in the world - they are quite literally the difference between life and death.

Yours in His service,  
Michael Davidson



Photo by cdoncel on Unsplash

## EASTER SERVICES

**Wednesday 16th April** - 7.30pm

**Thursday 17th April** - 7.30pm

**Friday 18th April** - 7.30pm    GOOD FRIDAY COMMUNION

### **Easter Sunday**

6.30am Dawn Service at Wallace Park Bandstand

10:30am Easter Sunday Family Service

# SERVICES IN MARCH

**Mornings:** Romans - A Letter that Makes Sense of Life

**Evenings:** Kingdom Come - Looking Forward to Jesus' Return

## 2nd March

10:30am PW Service Speaker: Rev David Cupples

6:30pm 'The Kingdom Is Near' Michael Davidson

## 9th March

10:30am Psalm 2 'Christ is Crowned' Peter Todd

6:30pm 'Mine is the Kingdom' Michael Davidson

## 16th March

10:30am Romans 12:1-8 'Transformed not Conformed'  
Michael Davidson

6:30pm Sunday Evening Praise in the Link

## 23rd March

10:30am Romans 12:9-21 'Transformed in Our Love For Others'  
Michael Davidson

6:30pm 'Thy Kingdom Come' Michael Davidson

## 30th March

10:30am Romans 13:1-7 'Heaven's Citizens and Human  
Government' (COMMUNION) Michael Davidson

6:30pm Mission in Ireland Evening in Maze Presbyterian  
Church Speakers: Rev Keith McCrory & Tom Gillian  
(Maynooth Community Church)



Watch online at  
[www.railwaystreet.org](http://www.railwaystreet.org)



Telephone Line Service  
028 9244 8979

# SERVICES IN APRIL

**Mornings:** Romans - A Letter that Makes Sense of Life

**Evenings:** Kingdom Come - Looking Forward to Jesus' Return

## 6th April

10:30am Romans 13:8-14 'Loving On The Level'  
Michael Davidson

6:30pm 'The Forever Kingdom' Michael Davidson

## 13th April

10:30am Romans 14:2-12 'Unity & Diversity Part 1' Peter Todd

6:30pm Mission Focus: Barnabas Aid Neville McCormack

## 20th April EASTER

10:30am EASTER FAMILY SERVICE

6:30pm No Evening Service

## 27th April

10:30am John 3:22-36 'He Must Increase...' Peter Huey

6:30pm Hebrews 7 'Melchizedek - The Bible's Mystery Man'  
Stephen Johnston

## 4 May

10:30am Romans 14 :13-23 'Unity & Diversity Part 2'  
Michael Davidson

6:30pm 'Missing The Kingdom' Michael Davidson



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## Bereavements

It is with sadness that we record the deaths of:

Frederick **Dereck** Saunderson died 22nd November 2024

Sarah **Mavis** Wightman died 24th December 2024

**Robert** James Wightman died 23rd February 2025

The congregation extends their heartfelt sympathy and prayers to their families at this time of loss.

## Births

It is with delight that we announce the birth of **Casper Dobbin**, son of Judith and Mark Dobbin, on 22nd December 2024



## Prayer Focus

Luke 11:1 “Lord, teach us to pray.”

The Christian life is a journey. As we live through each stage of our lives we have the opportunity of drawing close to God. One such opportunity open to all of us is to gather together for a time of prayer. We plan to meet on

**Monday 17th March &  
Monday 7th April from  
8.00-9.00pm in The Link**

Why not plan to come along? You will be made most welcome.



## Finance update February 2025

You will recall a worrying £31,000 deficit in our 2022 accounts which was significantly reduced by an increase in our Free Will Offering but still left our Church's expenditure exceeding our income by £10,000 in 2023 and pushing the main bank account nearly £20,000 "into the red" at the end of that year.



It had been hoped that FWO would continue to increase in 2024 but final figures show the contributions at an almost identical level to the previous (albeit improved) year. Indeed, had it not been for significant one-off receipts from Bequests and other one off income amounts, the situation at the end of 2024 would have been much more concerning.

On the face of it, the £25,000 in year surplus reported to the Church Committee at its February meeting has returned the main bank account to a modest positive figure of around £5,000. Nevertheless, without the benefit of one-off Bequests etc. there will likely be a further in year deficit for 2025 in the region of £10,000 to £15,000 unless we see an improvement in our FWO income.

We are very grateful for the FWO giving from all of our contributing families, whether part of our church for many years or having joined us recently.

However, it is worth noting that a modest increase in giving of £4 per month from each of our 250 contributing families would, when Gift Aid is added, generate the £15,000 we need to address our projected shortfall and return our operating account to a surplus of income over expenditure for the year.

On that note, if any one needs a FWO number or wishes to sign up for Gift Aid (so that HMRC will add 25% to your offering at no cost to the individual) please contact myself or any of the team.

The bank details for the Church to enable you to set up Standing Orders for regular payments are included at the end of this summary for your convenience.

On a positive note, Congregational giving for others remains strong with some £13,556.75 paid over to the PCI United Appeal and comfortably meeting our annual target for 2024. Again, I am confident our 2025 target of £12,975 will be comfortably met.

Final Bills for the Link project have now all been received with the construction costs coming in around £5,000 below the agreed Tender of £948,000. The Church Committee were also presented with the overall costs of the total build to include professional fees, furniture, kitchen equipment and the recently completed refurbishing of the wooden floor in the minor hall, which totalled £1.159m when everything is taken into account.

Set against the outstanding balance on the Bank Loan of £578,000, this means at the start of 2025, we have paid approximately half of the total costs of the Link Project as we continue to repay £6,300 monthly on the Loan as funded by our Gift Days in May and November.

One final bill is due to the contractors in the sum of £39,000, which is more than the credit balance currently available in the property account. High interest rates necessitate £6,300 being found for the monthly repayment on the bank loan and so the next Gift Day on 18 May will need to raise over £40,000 (including Gift Aid) to repay the contractor and maintain the loan repayments - for context the Gift Days in 2024 raised (with Gift Aid) around £26,000 last May and £29,000 in November. The contractor worked well with us throughout the build and it would be good to clear the final outstanding amount to them as soon as possible.

You can give to the Link “Gift Day” using the special envelopes that

will be available. Please make any cheques payable to “Railway Street Presbyterian Church” and, if you are a tax payer, remember to include your name, address and FWO number so that the church can claim Gift Aid of 25% on your gift.

You can also give to the “Gift Day” by bank transfer to the Property Account.

**Account Name: Railway Street Presbyterian Church**

**Sorting Code: 950361      Account Number: 61042858**

**Reference: Please use your FWO number**  
(if you don’t know this use your name)

Giving to Free Will Offering and United Appeal is via the main Account

**Account Name: Railway Street Presbyterian Church**

**Sorting Code: 950361      Account Number: 91026178**

**Reference: Please ref FWO or UA with your number and/or name**

Overall, we are heading in the right direction, but given continuing inflation and pay pressures through increased National Insurance costs coupled with interest rates reducing more slowly than we would have hoped, our regular giving remains our main source of income. As I said above, for little more than the price of a cup of coffee a month we could generate an “in year” surplus if everyone was to commit to giving a little extra on a regular basis.

Our sincere thanks goes out to all who continue to respond so positively to the needs of our Church, and of others, in these difficult economic times.

Many Thanks

Gordon Wallace, Treasurer

# 422

## ALL WELCOME

**March 27 - “Thinking with Both Hands”**

Rev Desi Maxwell

**April 24 - “Come Fly with Me”**

Ivan Woods, Ulster Aviation Society



All meetings are held at 2.30 pm in the Minor Hall and followed by refreshments in the Link

### Used Stamps

As we move into Spring and appreciate the colours all around us, we are mindful of those who are visually impaired. The gift of used stamps can help RNIB to raise vital funds to enable many people with sight loss to have a better quality of life. Please leave any stamps you have in the box on the front table.



### Church Defibrillator Location



The Church defibrillator is located in The Link, as shown in the photograph.

Monday March 24th at 8pm

### Joys of Spring

A flower demonstration by Nelson Small

Monday April 28th at 8pm

### In House – Chiefly Ourselves



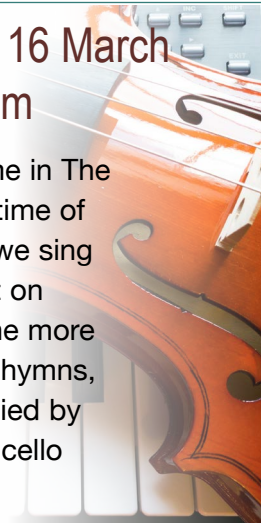
Saturday May 10th

## PW Conference, Assembly Buildings

Theme will be 'God....ever present Psalm 46 v 1'

## Sunday 16 March @6.30pm

All welcome in The Link for a time of Praise as we sing and reflect on some of the more traditional hymns, accompanied by keyboard, cello and flute.



## Bible Discovery

Concluding the topic of 'Prayer in the New Testament'

we will meet at 10.45am  
 in the Minor Hall

on Thursdays 6 and 20  
 March and 3 April





Join us for a

# Soup and Bread Lunch

plus coffee and tray bakes

straight after church on

**Sunday 23 March**

in the Minor Hall

hosted by the Romania  
Exodus Work Team

All proceeds go to the work of  
Exodus in Romania



## Belfast City Mission's Christmas Gift Appeal for Children and Teenagers 2024

It is a pleasure to report that, once again, there was an excellent response by our congregation to this annual appeal for gifts for needy young people. The contributions received were as follows:

- **Selection Boxes - 124**
- **Gift Cards/Vouchers from Toy Stores - 36**
- **Tins and Packets of Sweets - 17**
- **Monetary Donations, including Gift Aid - £1078**



On behalf of the Governing Body of the City Mission, I wish to express sincere gratitude and appreciation to those members of our congregation who contributed with generosity to this most worthy appeal. Roger (Vice President and Treasurer)

## Railway Street 4th Annual GB Display

Thursday 10th April 2025  
6.30pm in the Main Hall

More information to follow to GB families. If any church member would like to attend, please contact Hilary Milligan (07899 896879) re tickets.



## BB Awards Night

Saturday 12th April  
6pm to 8pm



We'll be having hot dogs and an ice cream van coming along before having our Awards Presentation inside the main Church.

All boys and families welcome

# RAISING CHILDREN

IN THE FAITH



An evening for parents and grandparents in church family to consider their role in raising children to know and love the Lord.

26TH MARCH 2025  
7PM

SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER  
OR CONTACT HANNAH





# DIVE TO THE DEPTHS

Join us as we go on a journey with the prophet Jonah to discover God's great love towards rebels! Along the way, we will enjoy lots of fun games, challenges, and craft.

**15TH-18TH APRIL 2025**

10am - 12:30pm  
Railway Street Presbyterian Church  
For children P2 - P7



## RSPC Easter Holiday Bible Club 15-18 April

Last year's Holiday Bible Club welcomed around 40 children, who had the opportunity to hear of God's plan to rescue and redeem His people through the book of Exodus. We explored how this was God's purpose for His people then, and how it remains true for us today through the completed work of Jesus. It was a week filled with lots of fun, led by an incredible team of leaders.

This year, we'll be diving into the book of Jonah, where we'll uncover the depths of our sin and the boundless depths of God's mercy. If you're able to help in any way, whether in preparation or during the week, please reach out to Hannah. Above all, please join us in praying that God will use this week for His glory, revealing more of Himself to the children as they engage with His Word and enjoy time together.





# 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

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