



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

Report of the death of Dr Alan Cairns

I send you the following report of the death of Dr Alan Cairns which appeared in the 'Belfast Telegraph' of November 7th.

Dr Cairns' funeral took place today in Ballygowan Free Presbyterian graveyard. The funeral service and the memorial service, held later in the afternoon in Hebron Church in Ballymoney, may be seen at Hebron Free Presbyterian Church Facebook and Sermonaudio websites.

It is a day of sorrow for very many here in Ulster.

We especially request prayer for Mrs Joan Cairns and her family.

Tributes by church as former minister Alan Cairns dies of coronavirus



Virus death: Dr Alan Cairns, from Ballymoney

Belfast Telegraph, November 07 2020 08:02 AM

Dr Alan Cairns (80) from Ballymoney, who was a member of the town's Hebron Free Presbyterian Church, was critically ill in Causeway Hospital and on a ventilator prior to his death on Thursday.

Hebron Church closed after "multiple cases" of the virus were found amongst the congregation, it was reported earlier this week.

It has not held services since October 25, after two members tested positive for the virus.

Hebron Church later confirmed that "multiple cases" were reported in several families linked to the church.

Speaking to the Belfast Telegraph yesterday, North Antrim MLA Mervyn Storey, who is an elder at Hebron Church, confirmed that he is currently self-isolating at his home after his son tested positive for the virus.

However, Mr Storey is not displaying any symptoms.

Addressing the outbreak at Hebron Church, Rev David Park said on Wednesday: "Sadly, there has been an outbreak of Covid-19 among our church families.

"Since reopening after lockdown the church oversight put government recommendations into place.

"On Sunday, October 25, we learned of two cases connected to the congregation. The church has not held public services since.

"When we learned of multiple cases among our church families and in the Ballymoney area, we took decisive action.

"The church was professionally deep cleaned, a fogging machine was purchased for future sanitisation and the church remains closed. This is under constant review."

Rev Park confirmed Dr Cairns' death in a live streamed Facebook service on Thursday.

He added that the grandfather of three, who was also a minister in Greenville, South Carolina for 30 years, was unable to attend church in October as he had been ill.



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"About three weeks ago today he went into hospital and for the past 12 days he was on a ventilator," said Rev Park. "I just want to say tonight how sad we are with his passing."

Mr Storey said he will be forever thankful to Dr Cairns after his mission in Bushside Orange Hall in 1974 resulted in the MLA coming to a "personal saving faith in Christ".

"We are very sad that he has been taken," added Mr Storey. "He was very close to his congregation in Ballymoney and in Greenville. He returned home when he retired and we had the joy in having him as a member of our congregation during those years of retirement.

"He was just someone that if you ever needed advice you could go to. He was a friend, he was a supporter and someone who genuinely loved his calling.

"The ministry wasn't a job to Alan Cairns, it was his life and his passion because he preached the gospel in all its fullness."

Dr Cairns is survived by his wife Joan, son Frank and the wider family circle. His funeral service will take place today but due to the current Covid-19 regulations, it will be strictly private. The service will be streamed by Hebron Church at 3pm.