



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

News of Christian Education in Ulster



Dr. S B Cooke presents Mrs. Karen McConnell with her diploma.

On Friday, 18th June, in The Paisley Jubilee Complex, Belfast, Mrs. Karen McConnell, BSc. received her Diploma of Christian Education in the sixth graduation ceremony since the Free Presbyterian Church began training its own Christian school teachers in 1988. Dr S B Cooke, Deputy Moderator, presented Mrs. McConnell with her diploma. Christian education within the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster is 20 years old. Our first school commenced in Kilskeery in September 1979. The Presbytery stipulates that our trainee teachers must obtain a university degree as part of their training. We congratulate Mrs. McConnell on obtaining her degree and on successfully graduating from our course.

Much credit is due to all our successful trainees, since the essence of their training is the practical work of teaching in the classroom. The workload is very heavy and, on behalf of the Christian education movement of the Free Presbyterian Church, we place on record our sincere gratitude to all our trainees and those supervising principals who give guidance and support to our trainees.



Probationers and trainees at the seminar take a tea break.

Our Annual Christian Education Seminar took place, in August, in the Whitefield College of the Bible. This week of study for trainees and probationary teachers (graduates from a state university or teacher training college) is part of their training programme. The seminar consists of a four-year course of lectures and practical studies with subjects such as Bible study, Methodology in Christian education, the Philosophy of Christian education and the History of Christian education as core subjects. Lecturers this year were Rev. David Creane, Mrs. Elizabeth Rutherford, principal of our Bangor school, Mrs. Ann Foster, principal of our Kilskeery

school, Mrs Pamela Foster and Rev Ivan Foster. Guest preacher was Rev. Gordon Dane. We had seven teachers attending the seminar, the highest for a number of years. Those attending were Miss Julie McAuley (first year trainee, Ballymoney), Miss Ruth McConnell (probationary teacher, Mourne), Mrs Diane McKew (probationary teacher, Portadown), Mrs. Ruth Daly (first year trainee, Kilskeery), Miss Laura Rice (third year trainee, Portadown), Mrs Janice Woods (fourth year trainee, Portadown) and Miss Julie Megaw (first year probationer, Newtownabbey).

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Rev Alan Smylie, Mrs Lois McClung (principal)
Mr. Brian McClung, Mrs Joan Parke (teacher) and Rev. Ivan Foster

Following recent renovations, Newtownabbey Free Presbyterian Church re-opened its refurbished church hall as a three classroom unit. Both pupils and teachers in the school will benefit from the extensive improvements made to the building. The opening of the renovated premises was conducted by Rev. Alan Smylie, minister in charge of the vacant congregation, and Rev. Ivan Foster, Convenor of the Presbytery Education Board. Rev. Foster was asked to unveil a plaque commemorating the event.

The cost of the work was covered by generous donations from members of the congregation before the re-opening so that the classrooms were opened debt-free. We join with the faithful folk in Newtownabbey in praising God for His faithfulness and mercy, during the difficult times the school and the church passed through. May the Lord fill the vacant pulpit soon with a man after His own heart.