

YOUTH COUNCIL PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 2011

Under God I would like to record my gratitude to the Young People of the Free Presbyterian Church, for giving me another opportunity to serve as President of the Youth Council. The first term for me has been a real learning curve, and hopefully we shall be able to build upon what has already been achieved over the past years.

I promise to give it my best efforts and will seek together with the Committee & Delegates of the Youth Council to promote the best interests of all of the Youth of our denomination.

- I was reading this morning about Jairus in Mark 5 v 22. Here was a father with a daughter of only 12 at the point of death. Jairus knew her only hope was in Christ. **She could not go to Him - so he pleaded with Christ to come to her.** His desire was that Christ would lay His hand upon her and she should live.

His request was graciously answered - and despite the throngs around the Messiah he made his way to her home. The situation humanly speaking was beyond hope as the news reached them that his daughter had died. **Yet the Saviour gave them HOPE.**

Mark 5:36 "As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe."

In the work of God and especially amongst the YOUTH there are many things which would make us afraid. **As we recommence another new term in the Youth Council we pray the Lord would come and say afresh – "Be not afraid, only believe".**

There were those there who laughed at our Saviour & poured scorn upon Him in coming to raise a dead youth – but the Word went forth and the daughter of Jairus was raised from the dead.

Despite all the unbelief, cynicism, worldly scorn that we have to face – there is hope and encouragement here for us. Christ still has power to raise those who are spiritually dead in sin.

May we see Christ come to this up and coming generation of young Free Presbyterians, & raise them from their spiritual deadness, to life in the Risen Lord. To this end we shall:-

- **Continue to emphasise the need for prayer amongst all our Youth.** How we need a new visitation from the Saviour, to our homes and families and Youth Fellowships (United Evenings of Prayer).
- **Continue to offer training** in personal witnessing and evangelism, and also leadership amongst our youth (Training Weekend in March/Leadership Seminar in November).
- **Continue to provide opportunities for Evangelistic Outreach** – Summer Open Airs; Evangelistic Teams to work this year in Co. Donegal & Monaghan & also home outreach amongst the boys and girls; Half-day regional event outreaches.
- **The Youth Council also seeks to promote – Inter-Fellowship** amongst the Youth in our denomination (I could not stress enough the importance of our Youth staying & working together. We are a Presbyterian Church and a not a collection of independent congregations!) Over the past two years we have had Fun & Fellowship Events at which various YFs have come together (I trust we shall be able to run them again this year).

- **This is one primary reason why I love to see the Summer Youth Camp taking place again (What an opportunity for youth to meet together for one week).**
- **Part of our remit is also to help Co-ordinate the Youth Work.**
 - Provincial Rallies - Lurgan
 - United Evangelistic Regional Rallies - September
- At our Delegates meetings to provide a forum for thought and discussion of the needs of youth in our denomination.
- **Discipleship is another vital aspect of our Youth Work.**

We are saved to Glorify God and to serve Him in His Church. I want the activities of the Youth Council to reflect this objective and train our Youth to take their places within their local congregations.
- **May we also seek to deepen the missionary interest of the youth of our denomination.**
 - This year we hope to run a work party out to Spain to help with some painting and decorating in the Spanish Christian Camp.
 - Also we are seeking to promote the 2012 Olympic Games as an opportunity for home missionary endeavour.
 - We shall also plan for our next missionary weekend.

The work is large and demanding. By the measurement of human ability it is beyond what we are able to do. But Christ is interested in our labours and if He is in the work then – we shall see youths just like the daughter of Jairus raised to new life in Him.

Rev. Ian Harris