

OFFERING HOPE & A NEW BEGINNING

Autumn 2025



A New Focus

Welcome to a brand new edition of News Focus!

For 44 years, Prison Fellowship has grown and developed to meet the needs of those we serve and who support us. Yet, our core mission has not changed and that is reflected in our new branding and publications.

Our new logo retains the reed at its centre, inspired by Isaiah 42:3: "A bruised reed He will not break, and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish." It reflects our commitment to those bruised and battered by crime—victims, families, and offenders—reminding us of Christ's compassion and justice for all.

Throughout Isaiah 42, Jesus is portrayed not as harsh or overbearing, but as gentle, godly, compassionate, and lowly. Just as He does not break a fragile reed, we too seek to support those society may view as insignificant and of little use.

As part of the ongoing development within Prison Fellowship, you will begin to see a number of changes. A new styled News Focus and, in the near future, our new website, are designed to

keep you better informed with news, prayer items, and stories of Hope and transformation.

We also have a new team member: Bryan Stewart. I invite you to read Bryan's story, as he joins us as our Operations Manager. We are excited about this new appointment, and I ask you to pray for him as he gets involved in the day-to-day running of our mission. May God bless those who meet together in prayer for PFNI, and we especially welcome two new groups in Ballyclare and Poyntzpass.

These are exciting times and we welcome your feedback as part of this renewed vision.

Robin Scott
CEO Prison Fellowship Northern Ireland

Countdown to Christmas Hope

Christmas Hope brings light to families affected by crime across Northern Ireland. For many mums, dads and carers connected to prison, December can mean impossible choices—heat, food, or a gift for the children. Christmas Hope ensures every child wakes to the joy of a present chosen with love.

This year we're simplifying donations to reach more families faster. Instead of collecting hamper items, we're focusing on two ways to give:

- Buy a new, unwrapped toy, and we'll match it to a child's age and deliver it with care. You can view our suggested toy list—and even buy directly online—at pfni.org/christmas-hope
- Make a financial donation, allowing us to purchase exactly what's needed where it's needed most.

Every gift is given in Jesus' name, with compassion and dignity, and often opens doors for ongoing support throughout the year.

Your generosity helps restore hope, ease pressure at home, and remind families they are not forgotten.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING CHRISTMAS HOPE REACH EVEN MORE FAMILIES THIS YEAR.

For assistance, or to arrange giving, please contact our office at info@pfni.org or phone 028 9024 3691.

Facing Your Giants

In June, the NI Prison Service contacted PFNI about running weekly courses over July and August based on PFNI's Lifesplan groups in Maghaberry and Magilligan. The request in itself shows the favour and trust that PF has built, so we quickly agreed and started to plan.

As we were looking at the life of King David recently, we decided to call the course 'Facing your Giants'. It would address the various giants the men on the course experiences such as alcohol, drugs, and mental health issues.

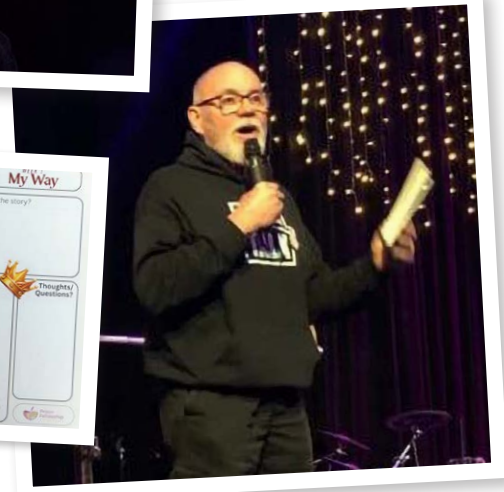
We ran the first group one day a week and designed a booklet for the men to work through. Sessions started at 9.30 am until lunchtime. We ate together and discussed what we had talked about while getting to know the men better.

After lunch, we brought in guest speakers that the men could relate to. Ian McDowall and Arthur White from 'Toughtalk' spoke about their past as debt collectors, doormen, a bodybuilder and a powerlifter and the dark paths that their lifestyles had led them down. When they were at the lowest parts in their lives they cried out to God, "If you're real, show me!" God graciously answered their pleas for help.

At the end of the first course, one of the men said what he heard helped him resist taking revenge, instead choosing to pray and ask God for strength. Many commented on the guest speakers' testimonies and how God had defeated their 'giants'. They all took Bibles when leaving - what an answer to prayer!

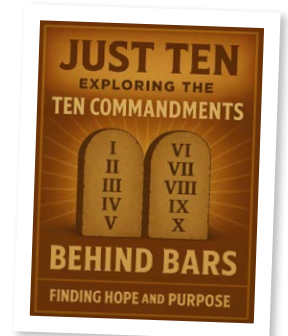
Please remember these men as they start their spiritual journeys and for wisdom for PFNI staff and volunteers as we walk with and mentor them. We give thanks for the opportunities that the courses have given to teach God's word and for open and honest questions.

Dean



Just Ten

PFNI runs a Lifesplan group in Maghaberry Prison called 'Just Ten'. They meet each Tuesday morning at 10 am in Foyle House for an hour. We are currently following a course where we discuss, debate, understand, and break down the Ten Commandments. The course is a 10-week commitment, with one commandment addressed each week.



Due to the room size, the group is limited to a maximum of 10 men. We are currently at week 5 and have enjoyed maximum numbers since its commencement. We always start with a hot coffee, a choccie biscuit and general day-to-day chatter before getting down to business, so to speak.

The prisoners enjoy open, honest conversation and are incredibly respectful. They are eager to learn and often discuss their own life difficulties and how these ten ancient laws translate into modern-day society. The commandments are usually a starting point for learning respect, integrity, and the sanctity of life. It has been surprising how many had never heard of the Ten Commandments!

We finish with prayer, followed by a short reflection and one-to-one conversations before the guys are returned to their cells.

I continue to receive positive feedback from prisoners and prison authorities alike. Several guys are waiting to attend, should any 'fall by the wayside'.

Please remember this group in your prayers, that they will encounter God, grow in faith and find purpose, giving hope behind bars.

Michael

Instilling Hope

Around twenty years ago, I met a lady called Pat Thomas for coffee. Many of you will remember Pat as a very faithful family worker who also had a huge heart for the women in Hydebank.



The first time I met Pat, I soon realised I was in the company of one incredible lady. She listened so well, and when she spoke, her words were full of His love and wisdom. She quoted scripture throughout our conversation and during our prayer together. That day I met someone who not only knew the Word, but lived it.

I left the coffee shop and as I drove off, 'Be Thou my Vision' was playing. Tears flowed and I had no doubt of the Lord's calling. Six months later, I met Robin Scott (again for coffee - there is a theme!). Robin is PFNI's Chief Executive and a man whose wisdom and leadership I value highly. We chatted about developing the work with women released from prison. Our thinking aligned, and my heart felt like it was leaping!

I left the office that day, and as I drove off, 'Be thou my Vision' played in my car. The tears gushed, but from a place of thankfulness and knowing, without doubt, this was the direction the Lord was leading me.

In September, Prison Fellowship is excited to launch 'Instilling Hope Belfast', a space where some of the most incredible women - all of whom have spent time in Hydebank - will enjoy quality time together. I can't wait for the great craic, the times of worship, and to learn from His word together.

Neil, our Male Aftercare worker, set aside our own cupboard space in University Street which touched my heart. We will use that space to fulfil God's vision that began 20+ years ago and what has blossomed into a loving family.

'Instilling Hope Belfast' Female Aftercare support group founded its name in Romans 15:13. Please join me in praying that the 'God of hope would fill each woman's heart with joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit, they too may abound in hope'.

Lynne

Welcome to PFNI, Bryan

Hello! My name is Bryan, I'm 31 years old, and I'm married to Claire. We have a 2-year-old daughter named Amelia.

For the last seven years, I have served as Youth Director at Hamilton Road Baptist Church in Bangor. I'm thankful for that extensive experience, which I can now bring to my new role as Operations Manager at PFNI.

I'm looking forward to the varied tasks and responsibilities that lie ahead as I lead the staff into a deeper relationship with Jesus in our working lives.

Walking alongside young people and adults for 10+ years, I fully understand the need for a listening ear and a practical hand. That is what drew me to PFNI as we share the love of God with those who have been cast out by society.

I greatly value your prayers and hope someday to meet with you as we share our love for Jesus.

Bryan Stewart
Operations Manager



Prayer Focus October 2025

Prisons - Female

The female prison population remains high and many of the women are struggling with fear, mental health and addiction as well as coping with separation from their children.

Please pray for E. who was recently released. Pray that she will be able to get connected to a local church and that she will be able to find a job

Family Support

Pray for those families who are struggling with a cycle of addiction and the devastation this brings. Pray especially for D. and her family.

Pray for a Christmas Craft morning which we are planning for October and November, that it will be a time to develop friendships as we think about Emmanuel, God with us.

Pray that the Lord will direct us towards those families who could benefit from our support at this time.

Aftercare - Female

Pray for N. who very sadly lives in complete fear in her own home. Many things need to change. Pray that she would be able to put herself first and make brave choices and for her protection.

Pray for Lynne and Joanne as they work together, planning the way ahead to continue to best support women in custody and on their release. Many great things are happening and we are thankful but we just feel there is 'more needed'.

Pray for L. She has been in prison so often in her young life. This is her longest time on the outside. She is doing great, praise the Lord! Keep praying for her and especially her heart to help others like herself.

Aftercare - Male

Please pray for the leaders and volunteers in Lifesplan. They meet every week to provide worship, teaching, prayer and hospitality to released prisoners. Pray God continues to bless this group.

Pray for the connections that Prison Aftercare has made in the community. Pray that the local support organisations and churches will accept invitations to visit and meet released prisoners at PF.

Pray for D. He is looking for a job and would love to find something soon. It is very difficult for him due to his past and current conditions. Pray for help and understanding for the right opportunity to open up for him in God's time.

Prisons - Male

Pray for Ken, a faithful volunteer who got married at the end of August, that the Lord will bless him and his wife.

As we prepare for Christmas Hope, pray we will be able to obtain all the information we need for the hampers and to make this work well.

Pray for M., who has very little family support. Pray he would continue to engage well with PF staff and that we can be a support.

Volunteers and General

Please pray for our new Prayer Groups that launched in September. Pray for the volunteers hosting the groups: Calum, Jean, Margaret and Gillian.

Praise God for last month's supporter event, and for everyone who attended, faithfully praying for and standing with the work of PFNI.

Remember the volunteers and staff who help to promote Prison Fellowship around the country. Pray for safe travels and open hearts.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. **Colossians 4:2**

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Northern Ireland