

UPD 2008 Speech by Northern Irish Leader Paul Taggart
Newark United Methodist Church
Sunday, June 29, 2008

Hello, my name is Paul Taggart. I'm the youngest member of the Northern Irish leaders, but since now I don't get asked for I.D. when I head out, it makes me feel a wee bit old, lol! I've just graduated from University in History and Politics and this September, I will begin my training as a Secondary School teacher in these subjects. One of the modules I studied last year was American politics, so I have dozens of questions to ask you all about the forthcoming elections; that is depending if my political views are of the same party, lol!

Today I want to share with you my feelings about the Ulster Project. A few weeks ago a friend who wasn't aware of the Project asked me why was there a need for the Project since there is peace in Northern Ireland. I explained to him that yes, there is peace in Northern Ireland, but that doubts remain about the presence or even existence of reconciliation. I was watching a film the other day to which you could all possibly relate, "Mississippi Burning." Just because an Act of Congress stipulated that African Americans were now granted full legal rights, did not necessarily mean that a lot of racist Americans changed their views. And so, it is the same in Northern Ireland. Just because war will never be used as an alternative to peace, there is no immediate mass embracing of each other's cultures and it really will take a long time for each community to trust each other. This is a task that requires a lot of hard work and something, which the Ulster Project can assist in achieving. By working together in Delaware, we all can help this process of reconciliation.

I'm proud to be a leader to these teens. Even though some may have forgotten sheet music a few times or asked too many questions, they were chosen for their abilities and this has certainly become apparent over the past few months. The initial seeds of the UPD were sown over three decades ago and in January of this year, you all planted your seeds. It is now up to you to nurture them over the next four weeks and then reap their rewards when you return home.

To do this, bear in mind the words of Mahatmas Gandhi:

*"Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words.
Keep your words positive because your words become your behaviors.
Keep your behaviors positive because your positive behaviors become your
habits.
Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values.
Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny."*

The great American football coach, Vince Lombardi, said a few things for us to remember:

*"We know how rough the road will be, how heavy the load will be. We
know about the barricades that wait along the track, but we have set our soul
ahead upon a certain goal ahead, and nothing left from hell to sky shall ever
turn us back."*

and *"The dictionary is the only place success comes before work. Hard work is
the price we must all pay for success."*

I want to say sincere thanks for inviting us to Delaware and for making this dream come true. We appreciate your warm hospitality and we will treasure these memories forever. Thank you