



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### Historic Services in Wales



**Rev. Richard Monteith and his wife Hazel with (L-R) Grace, Faith, Timothy, Laura and the twins Jemma and Janet**

#### *First ordinations of Free Presbyterian ministers in the Principality*

The 24th and 25th September 2004 marked two very special occasions for the people of God who meet in Rhiwderin Free Presbyterian Hall and those of Cephas Free Presbyterian Church in Merthyr Tydfil. These were the dates set by Presbytery for the ordination to the Gospel ministry of Mr. Richard Monteith and Mr. Nigel Smyth. Sadly, events like this are somewhat of a rarity in the Wales of today. Therefore, these meetings were all the more precious to those who love the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Principality.

Rev. Ken Elliott, minister of Bethany Free Presbyterian Church in Portadown, Northern Ireland, and Convenor of the Forward Movement Committee, presided over the meeting in Rhiwderin. He welcomed the congregation that had filled our little Hall.

It was certainly a joy to see so many in the meeting. Rev. Brian McClung (Newtownabbey) led the congregation to the throne of Grace in prayer, Rev. Thomas Murray (Markethill) read the scriptures, after which Rev Wesley Graham (Bristol) preached on Psalm 78. He warned of the danger of "turning back", citing Ephraim as an example, v 9: "The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle."

Rev. Ivan Foster (Kilskeery), as acting Clerk of Presbytery, asked the prescribed questions of Mr. Monteith, reminding those gathered that what was taking place was not something new. Wales has had many preachers in the past who have stood for and preached this very same Gospel. All the elders and ministers present then gathered to the front of the meeting and laid hands upon Mr. Monteith and Rev. Roy Stewart (Cookstown) offered the ordination prayer.

#### **Preaching**

Following the ordination, Rev. Gordon Ferguson (London) brought a charge to the minister, speaking from the words of Paul to Timothy, 2 Tim 4:1-5. Here he stressed the duties of the Gospel minister as set forth by Paul.

#### **Testimony**

Mr. Monteith was then asked to give a word of testimony. He told of how the Lord spoke to him in a gospel mission in an Orange Hall in Tullywhisker in Co. Tyrone and how as a lad, broken down by the strivings of God's Holy Spirit, he sought Christ's pardon and mercy as freely offered in the gospel.

#### **Welcome**

In welcoming family members and friends to the meeting, he said that he was very glad to



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have join with them at the meeting, family members and friends from Ulster, including his parents, Mr. and Mrs. David Monteith from Mulvin, Co. Tyrone, and also his wife's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jackie Neville from Kilskeery. He also expressed his delight that many acquaintances from the local area came into the meeting as well.

Greetings then were brought by Rev. David Priestley, on behalf of Presbytery. Rev. Dynes Uprichard spoke on behalf of the Churches in Wales and then Mr Drew McIntyre, an elder from the congregation in Mulvin, Mr. Monteith's home church, also brought greetings. Mr. Nigel Smith, who was ordained and installed as the new minister of Cephas Free Presbyterian Church in Methyr Tydfil, closed the meeting in prayer.

Afterwards a lovely supper was provided by the ladies, in Rhiwderin village hall next door to the church. A special word of thanks must be extended to all for their help in making this meeting run so smoothly.

Very especially we praise the Lord Himself for superintending all the proceedings with His good hand of Mercy and Grace.

The next day in Merthyr Tydfil, Mr. Nigel Smyth was ordained and installed as minister of Cephas Free Presbyterian Church. Rev. Roy Stewart led the meeting and the acting clerk was Rev. George Whyte, Mr. Smyth's former minister. Rev. Monteith, in keeping with the tradition that the last man ordained speaks at the next ordination service, preached, as did Rev. Alan Smylie.

It was fitting in the year of the centenary of the Welsh revival of 1904, that these first Free Presbyterian ordinations should take place.