



# The Burning Bush—Online article archive

## Jesus Christ Superstar protest

A protest was held outside the Grand Opera House in Belfast on Saturday afternoon 5th November 2011 against the production entitled: Jesus Christ Superstar. This year marks the 40th anniversary of its first production for the stage. Around 400 specially prepared leaflets highlighting the slanderous attack upon the person and work of Jesus Christ contained in this 'rock opera', were distributed to people attending the final day's performance of this 'rock opera'.

### Service

A short service was held following the protest. After the singing of the hymn: I am not ashamed to own my Lord or to defend His cause, Rev. David McLaughlin (Carryduff FPC) led in prayer. Rev Brian McClung (Newtownabbey FPC) then spoke on *John 5:22,23 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.*

Over 20 people took part in the protest. Other ministers in attendance were Rev. John Woods (John Knox Mem FPC) , Rev. Philip Gardiner (Carrickfergus FPC) , Rev. David Priestley (Bangor FPC) and Rev. Graham Middleton (Donaghadee FPC).

### Director

During the protest one of the show's Directors approached Rev. Priestley concerning the reasons behind the protest. When Rev Priestley objected to the content surrounding the portrayal of Christ's relationship with Mary Magdalene this Director acknowledged that they had removed these scenes and replaced them with scenes from the resurrection. Another conversation took place between Rev McClung and the Grand Opera House Chief Executive, who also took one of the leaflets.

(Photographs by Mr Selwyn Daly)



Protest leaders: (L-R) Revs. Philip Gardiner, David McLaughlin, John Woods, Brian McClung, David Priestley and Graham Middleton.



Discussion between the director of the musical and Rev David Priestley



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Protest underway.