



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Free Presbyterian schools' graduation ceremony



Mrs. Sarah Brown presented with her Diploma by Rev. Ivan Foster.

The Paisley Jubilee complex in Belfast was the location of the seventh graduation ceremony of the teacher training programme of the Free Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Sarah Brown was the graduand. Rev. Ivan Foster, Convenor of the Presbytery's Education Board, welcomed the 250 friends and visitors to the service. He particularly welcomed the family and friends of Mrs. Sarah Brown, BA, as well as the parents of pupils and the teaching staff of the various Free Presbyterian schools.

TWENTY-THREE YEARS

This year Christian education within the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster is 23 years old. Our first school commenced in Kilskeery in September 1979. The training programme for our own teachers began in the summer of 1988. Since then, fifteen teachers have been trained under the scheme.

Rev. Foster said that comments by a leading educationalist in England, Mr. Chris Woodhead, a former chief inspector of schools, had been encouraging to all involved in the Free Presbyterian teacher training programme. Mr. Woodhead was reported in the "Daily Mail" as saying that amongst the things that had to go in the present state system of teacher training were "all the university teacher training courses. Let's bypass the progressive academics who fill young teachers with silly ideas and train them the sensible way — alongside good teachers in the classroom." This is precisely what we have been doing since 1988, said Mr. Foster. The Free Presbyterian Church stipulates that trainee teachers must also obtain a university degree as part of their training. Most trainees accomplish this through an extern degree course. Congratulations to the successful graduate were offered by Rev. Foster on obtaining her degree and on successfully graduating from the training course.

Mr. Foster said that much credit was due to all successful trainees, since the essence of their training is the practical work of teaching in the classroom. The workload is very heavy and the remuneration small. On behalf of the Christian education movement of the Free Presbyterian Church, he placed on record their sincere gratitude to all our trainees and especially the young woman who graduated that night.

The guest preacher at the service was Rev. John Greer of Ballymena. He preached on "Phinehas' zeal for the Lord," Numbers 25: 11. His application of the lessons of Phinehas to the labours of the Christian teacher in this godless age was very powerful and many testified to the encouragement the Word of God was to them.

The offering at the meeting was for the Teacher Training Bursary Fund out of which assistance is given to trainees to help them pay their university fees.



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The tape of the service is available from Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church, price £1.75 postage paid.