



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

Free Presbyterians Protest at Sabbath breaking by Irish Football Association



The open-air service in progress outside Tyndale Memorial Free Presbyterian Church.

Free Presbyterians and other Christians took part in a peaceful protest outside Tyndale Memorial Free Presbyterian Church on the Sabbath afternoon, March 29th, in opposition to Northern Ireland's first ever Sabbath fixture on home soil. The protest took the form of an open-air service with the preaching of God's Word.

The Irish Football Association has never before staged an international game on the Lord's Day but claims it was "forced" to break new ground by UEFA's 'Week of Football' initiative. The Free Presbyterian Church has criticised the IFA for failing to inform local church groups or to engage in any contact with local congregations. The Tyndale Church is in Donegall Avenue, the main route used by football

fans to reach Windsor Stadium where the game was staged.

Reverend Raymond Robinson, of Kesh Free Presbyterian Church, was amongst those who held placards and handed out leaflets on Donegall Avenue. He is Convenor of the Free Presbyterian Government and Morals Committee. He told Press Association Sport: "Our opposition is to the breaking of observance of the Lord's day. We believe in the Sabbath being kept holy. It seems more and more that the football agenda is being driven by the television companies and not what God says, or what public opinion is. A delegation met the IFA and expressed our concerns. We found it interesting that the likes of Gibraltar and Spain had special circumstances (within the UEFA schedule) but the IFA couldn't have the same for observing Sunday as the Lord's day. We were also surprised at the IFA not contacting local churches about the fixture, which we felt would have been common courtesy. They did say they would seek to accommodate us and help out but if we had never mentioned it that would never have happened."



Mr John Dumigan was one of those giving our tracts near the entrance to Windsor Stadium.