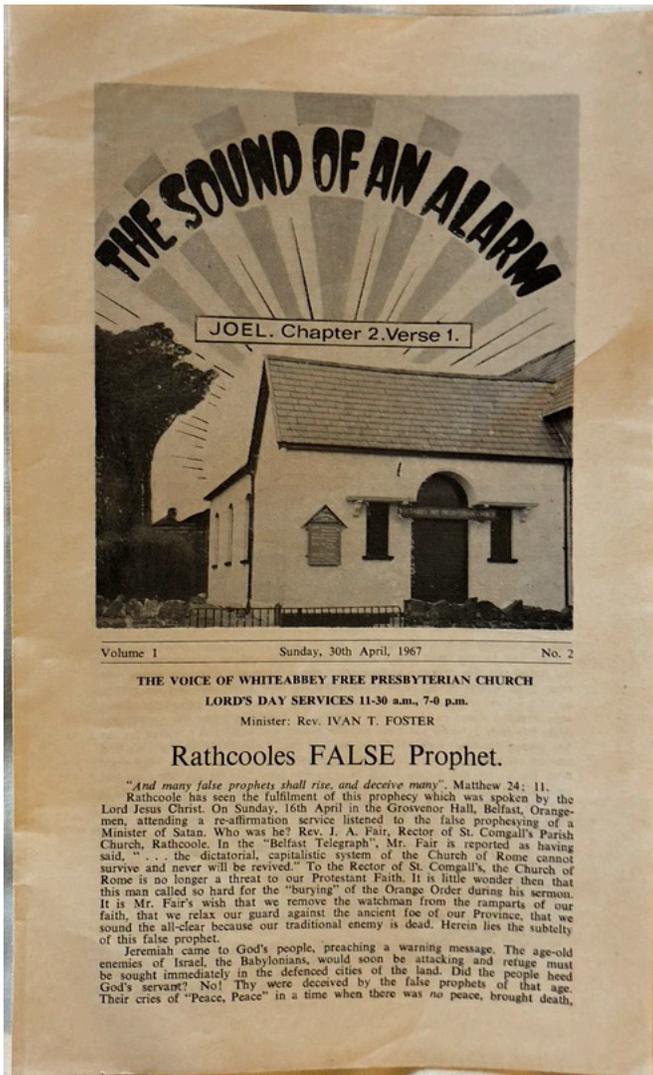




The Burning Bush - Online article archive

The Burning Bush turns 50 this month!

What follows is a look back at the developing history of the Burning Bush.



A forerunner of the BB which I produced while a student in Whiteabbey FPC. It was somewhat short lived since I moved permanently to Lisbellaw FPC, April 1968.



First edition of BB - March 1970. Some subsequent early editions follow.



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THE BURNING BUSH
The Monthly Magazine of LISBELLAW FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Editor: Rev. IVAN FOSTER APRIL 1970

PRIESTS in CLOGHER CATHEDRAL
ECUMENISM DRESSED IN ITS TRUE COLOURS

FREE PRESBYTERIANS PROTESTING AT THE VISIT OF THE PRIESTS

Upwards of fifty Free Presbyterians gathered to protest outside Clogher Cathedral on the occasion of the enthronement of the new Bishop, Dr. Patrick Hanson. As usual there were horror-stricken faces. "How dare they come here and insult us!" How dare they indeed, but then no insult was intended, and if anyone was insulted we are extremely sorry... sorry that they have chosen to be insulted by truth. The placards carried by our protesters plainly denounced the knavery that was being practised in the Cathedral in the name of Protestantism. Some carried quotations from the 39 Articles such as, "THE MASS IS A BLASPHEMOUS PABLE AND A DANGEROUS SOCIETY". Article 31. Others had simple statements like, "FELLOWSHIP WITH ROME IS CONTRARY TO THE FAITH OF THE LORD". After the protest the group gathered around Rev. Ivan Foster who prayed that God would rid Ulster of Romanism and send an awakening of old-

THE BURNING BUSH
A FREE MAGAZINE ISSUED BY LISBELLAW, OMAGH and CLOGHER VALLEY FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES
Editor: Rev. IVAN FOSTER JUNE 1970

TYRONE COUNCIL ORDERS GOSPEL HALL TO COME DOWN

THE HALL WHICH IS ANNOYING THE ECUMENISTS SO MUCH

Tyrone County Council Planning and Highways Committee has refused to allow the Free Presbyterian Congregation in the Clogher Valley to continue using a hall that they have erected. The hall is situated at Kiltiernon beside the main Fivemiletown - Clogher road. It was erected as a temporary place of worship after the future use of the nearby Orange Hall was suddenly and inexplicably withdrawn. A meeting is held every Lord's day afternoon at 3.30 p.m.

when a congregation averaging around 150 meets. The reasons given by the Committee for refusing to give their approval are that the worshippers' cars would cause congestion and be a traffic hazard. This unfair decision is going to be fought. We say that the decision is unfair and for the following reasons:- a) While on some Sundays there was parking on the verge of the road this has now been

THE BURNING BUSH
A PROTESTANT EDUCATION FOR A PROTESTANT CHILD

The Magazine of Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church and Independent Christian School
Editor: Rev. Ivan Foster
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1982

This was the call issued by Rev. Ivan Foster at the monthly meeting of Omagh District Council, when the Chilver Report on the future of the two Roman Catholic teacher training colleges was debated.

Describing Rome's cries of "Hands off our colleges" as hypocritical, Rev. Foster demanded to know why it was that Rome showed no such scruples when it came to interfering in and dominating the State School system, which was almost 100% Protestant. "She is not content at running her own schools. She is determined to run the Protestant schools as well." Rev. Foster cited an incident at Augher Primary School as an example of Rome's intrusion into Protestant schools. A Roman Catholic teacher was given a part-time appointment in the school. (This is the second attempt to make such an appointment; the first being thwarted by parents' objections). Despite the parents of two thirds of the pupils objecting, the school committee and the Southern Area Education and Library Board were very reluctant to do anything. The general reaction from the authorities to the parents' objections was, "You can like it or lump it." The Western Area Board and the Southern Area Board are both dominated by Roman Catholics.

Councillor Foster pointed out that Omagh District Council had very deliberately voted two Roman Catholics on to the Western Area Board to represent the council. One of them, Councillor Mrs. Grant, is a teacher in a Roman Catholic school. How can it be fair or just that such a state of affairs is permitted? Councillor Stephen Mc Kenna, S.D.L.P., said, in a reply to Councillor Foster, that Roman Catholics on an Area



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The change to a 'tabloid' size regular monthly edition of "The Burning Bush" was prompted by the success of the printed article, "**The Remembrance Day Massacre in Enniskillen**". This told the story behind the massacre of some 12 Protestants attending the Remembrance Day service who were murdered by an IRA bomb. Eleven were killed instantly and another man, a local High School Principal, Mr. Ronnie Hill, died thirteen years later, having never awoken from a coma. There were over sixty injured, some very seriously indeed. The Westminster Government and the Ecumenical Churches in Ulster wished to hide the truth concerning the Roman Catholic Church's connection with the hiding of the bomb in one of its premises and did all they could by deceit and lies to accomplish this end.

The article I wrote ran to over 50,000 copies and this prompted me to launch a 'newspaper' style regular edition of "The Burning Bush".

It came out on the 18th anniversary of the first edition of the "The Burning Bush" in 1970.

Many and varied have been the issues written about and reported on over the years.

At all times, we sought to be truthful and avoid exaggeration or hyperbole. We sought to write without fear or favour. We tried not to hesitate in criticising any who we believed were acting and speaking in error. That meant at times directing plain disapproval against fellow Free Presbyterians.

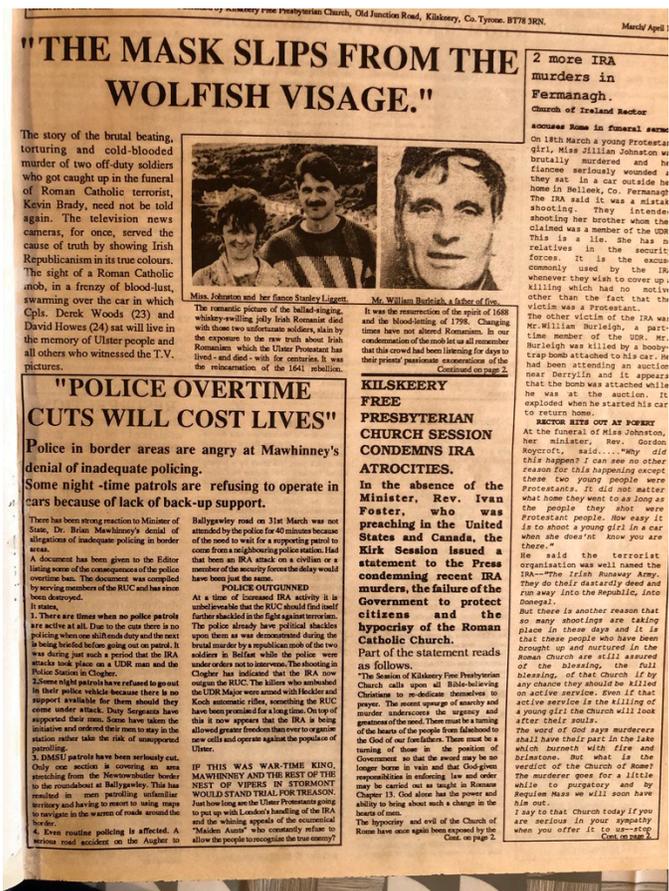
Naturally, that cost us the support and approval of some, but I do believe that time indicated that we were not too far wrong in our remarks and observations!

Throughout the fifty years, my wife Ann was my faithful and uncomplaining 'spell and grammar' checker. Considering that each edition contained approximately 4500 words, and that there were some 219 regular newspaper sized editions, from March 1988 until we went totally digital in 2007, that amounts to some 1,000,000 words! Of course, her labours have not stopped as we have continued publishing numerous articles on our webpage month by month.

As well as doing this, in those early years she was running a school and raising a family of six! She has been a faithful help meet indeed!

At present, our website is managed by my son, Rev Andy Foster, minister of Penticton Free Presbyterian Church in Canada, who is required to cope with my almost ceaseless outpourings for the days are getting darker and the need for shouting out a warning is ever more urgent. I write articles and circulate sermons by email to over 100 people directly before they are mounted on our website. It is incumbent upon the watchman to report what he sees. "For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth," Isaiah 21:6.

That we have sought to do in pulpit and publications for nigh on 55 years. The burden remains and the fire burns still but while "the spirit indeed is willing," sadly, "the flesh is weak." I feel the passage of years and both the 'writer and the corrector' know that soon the pen will have to be laid down.



The first edition that was published in a tabloid format



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

Now that may please some critics, but for some time the terrible issues facing the people of God have been the subject of the warnings of others. I think of two websites: '**The Sound of an Alarm**', which has been holding aloft the old Banner of Gospel Truth for quite some time and a more recent but welcome addition to the ranks of contenders for the faith, '**Protestant Revival**'.

The Lord will never be without a witness and we commend both these sites to all.

We are thankful for the Lord's mercy throughout the last 50+ years and know that the labour has not been in vain. As long as we have the health and strength to continue, we will, though perhaps at a slightly slower pace.

I must sincerely thank all those who have supported the work over the years, perhaps especially those who generously supported the publication from month to month financially in the days when we printed the paper edition. Their generosity thus made the witness possible. In more recent days, since we have gone digital, many have been the 'emailers' who took the time to thank us and encourage us in our labours.

You will never know just how much that meant to me. In the Lord's name I thank you all.

"The Burning Bush" website will remain, the Lord willing, long after we have gone, as a source of information for those seeking guidance on the issues facing the people of God.

Over the years, we have made friends and established contacts in many, many countries. It is ever a source of amazement to me that from out of the somewhat isolated west of Ulster, there has gone out a witness almost, it can be said, to the ends of the earth. The reports I get from the website contacts indicate that we have readers throughout the five continents. China, Iran, Turkey, and many, many other unlikely countries have those who frequently visit and download from "The Burning Bush" website.

I must say that was never envisaged when we began the witness. But we can but praise the Lord for His blessing upon the efforts made for "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain," Psalm 127:1.

To Him be all the glory.

Ivan Foster.

2nd March 2020.