

## The Baptist Assembly in Wales: 12 - 13 June 2009



Beginnings are often fringed with excitement and expectation and this year's Baptist Assembly in Wales was no exception as the South Wales Baptist Association joined with the Baptist Union of Wales (English Wing), the South Wales Baptist College and BMS World Mission to host a historic first joint assembly. The Assembly was held over two days from the 12 to 13 June at the "Llwyfan" in Carmarthen where the

Baptist Union of Wales have their headquarters.

The theme of the Assembly: 'Momentum – moving forward in Christ' was hugely significant for Baptists in Wales and it underlined our commitment to explore new ways of working together. It marked the beginning of a journey that will hopefully gain further momentum as we move on in faith.

'Excellent time' 'brilliant' 'one of the best events I've been to' 'can't wait till next year' were some of the remarks made by the delegates to the association team who were delighted by such a positive response. Close to 200 delegates attended the Assembly with more than 600 coming to the closing celebration.

[Dr Tony Campolo was the invited speaker at the Assembly and all were truly inspired and challenged by the Bible Studies and stirring key note address to a packed chapel on the Saturday evening.](#)

BMS World Mission played a significant part in providing the technical input and expertise and the Revd David Kerrigan spoke of the way God journeys with us through life, searching us out, protecting, disturbing, guiding and blessing us so that we might be a blessing to others. Mark Craig, Delyth Wyn Davies, and the BMS France Action Team also shared their experience.

Peter Thomas and Marc Owen of the Baptist Union of Wales (BUW) together with Nick Bradshaw and Andy Hughes of the South Wales Baptist Association (SWBA) have developed a good working relationship over a number of years which is now bearing fruit as we see the two Baptist families in Wales growing even closer and new joint initiatives are being explored and actioned.

In an envisioning session Peter Thomas, the General Secretary of BUW unpacked the theme 'momentum' noting that "God is the initiator of momentum – the first cause of perpetual creation and incarnation: He is the constant creative power which brings forth life and energy, revival and renewal. Manifested within the span of that constant activity is our watch, our opportunity for this momentum includes the moment, this moment in time, this opportunity to respond and to serve." Recognising 400 years since Baptist beginnings he said "Our yesterdays should not be dwelling places but a sojourn from where we move on."

Nick Bradshaw, Team Leader of SWBA went on to challenge delegates in the areas of Prayer: that it must be about abiding in Christ and hearing his heart, Partnership: that as God's people we are about Kingdom work needing to be involved with all God's people as we do so and Participation: that it is for all to play their part; encouraging an understanding of what it takes for missionary discipleship to be at the forefront of church activity.

Baptists in Wales are now looking forward to the year ahead as they together discern God's will for the future and discover his guidance for the forward journey assured that He is able to do

immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine.

By Nick Bradshaw and Peter Thomas