

Following in the footsteps of the Holy Spirit ... Visits to Sporting Marvels and the Bible College of Wales

After we had spent three days together with Gerhard Bially at the “Celebration for the Nations” worship event in Llanelli, South Wales, we visited the ministry of “Sporting Marvels” in the Rhondda valleys and then drove back to Swansea to attend the weekly prayer meeting on the Derwen Fawr site of the former “Bible College of Wales”. Meanwhile Gerhard travelled by train to West Wales to spend three days at “Ffald-y-Brenin”, then returning eastwards to “Victory Church” in Cwmbran near Newport.

Sporting Marvels

We have been privileged to be involved in the Sporting Marvels ministry since 2003. The vision of Sporting Marvels for community transformation in the Rhondda Valleys in South Wales particularly touched Margaret’s heart as her mother was born and grew up in Maerdy, one of the 34 Rhondda villages. We both immediately knew that the vision for Sporting Marvels had come from the Lord.

Rhondda was once the centre of the coal mining industry in South Wales. It is now an economically depressed community that faces many challenges, especially for children and teenagers. Drugs, alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, violence, criminality and mass unemployment all contribute to the problem. The 2001 National Census concluded that Rhondda was the poorest region within the UK, and had the lowest proportion of population regularly attending church in the UK – which is an incredible fact for a place that was at the heart of the Welsh Revival in 1904!

The vision and strategy of Sporting Marvels was born in July 2002 when, John Bullock, then a pastor of a church in the Rhondda, posed a question to three prominent personalities of Welsh Rugby - notorious not only for their rugby skills but also their unsocial, often violent behaviour - Chris and Clive Jones and their friend, Phil Davies. They had miraculously become Christians in the early 1990s and since then had met with John every Friday to pray for revival in Wales. The question was this: *“What would you try for God if you knew you couldn’t fail?”* Phil Davies immediately received a vision to place a positive Christian role model in front of every kid in the Rhondda valleys every day until Jesus returns. He believed in the vision so much that he walked away from a very well paid management job in rugby football to begin this faith ministry.

Sporting Marvels is now established as a Christian ministry within the Rhondda Valleys using the medium of sport to serve the kids in local schools and is supported by prayer and financial partners locally and world-wide. They also have a strategy to mobilise 33,000 intercessors, one for each of the homes in the Rhondda, and each intercessor is assigned to one of the 34 Rhondda valley villages. We pray for the village of Maerdy!

In partnership with school head teachers, Sporting Marvels offers specially trained young people (each called a “Marvel”) to lead sports and religious instruction lessons within the schools. From 2003 to 2011 the Lord brought 28 Marvels - Christian sports teachers - from Africa, the United States and Australia, who have been positive role models in the lives of thousands of Rhondda’s children! They demonstrate Christian values, a healthy life style and the importance of developing a good character and holding to godly principles. They seek to build strong relationships with the kids and to influence their behaviour for the good, aiming to guide them in the choices they make, changing the way they think - about themselves, about others, and about their community. Now in 2013, the present seven Marvels are all

home grown, Welsh young people – some of the harvest of all the seeds planted by the previous workers. And there are many more now waiting to be trained as Sporting Marvels.

From small beginnings in 2003, the Sporting Marvels ministry has now completed its tenth school year, and is continuously looking to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ in the Rhondda valleys and to bring about community transformation!

We have always believed that the Lord wants to connect this ministry with the European continent - especially Germany - but it was only this year when the Lord opened the door for Phil Davies to visit us in Dusseldorf – his first visit to Germany! This resulted in Phil meeting a young man who has just completed his Abitur and is looking to train as sports teacher as well as improve his English. In June/July of this year he spent two weeks in the Rhondda on “active service” with Sporting Marvels in the Rhondda valleys and we pray that this very successful experience will keep the door open for further cooperation between the youth of Germany and Wales.

For more information about Sporting Marvels visit the website: www.sportingmarvels.com.

The Bible College of Wales

The Bible College of Wales was founded in 1924 by Rees Howells in Swansea, South Wales. He was the director of the college until his death in 1950. His son, Samuel Howells, led the college until 2002, when it was taken over by Alan C Scotland. In July 2009, the Bible College of Wales saw its last graduation. Due to the growing maintenance costs of the large site and the ageing buildings, the college moved to the town of Rugby in England in September 2009, under the new name of the Trinity School of Ministry.

The site and buildings of the Bible College of Wales in Swansea are a great monument and witness to the faith and work of Rees Howells. Intercessory prayer became his hallmark, impacting national policy and international affairs. The Christian church still feels the impact of his teaching of the truths from the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures in a unique and amazing way. His life and ministry is documented in Norman Grubb's book “Rees Howells - Intercessor”, which has been translated into more than 40 languages, including German, and has sold over ten million copies worldwide.

Rees Howells and the community of saints at the Bible College of Wales turned the course of human history. It was this band of intercessors that prayed right through World War II and prevailed in their prayers until the victory over Hitler. They prayed through the 1948 United Nations mandate for Israel to become a Jewish nation and again their prayers were answered. After Rees Howells' death in 1950, under the directorship of his son Samuel, they prayed through the Cuban missile crisis as the USA and USSR hurtled towards World War III and God turned the crisis around.

Reinhard Bonnke was one of the many international students at the Bible College of Wales, Many Christians in Wales and around the world have been praying for the restoration and redemption of the inheritance of Rees Howells and his Bible College of Wales.

We came to know a young Korean man who works with the missionary society that organised “Celebration for the Nations” in Llanelli. In January 2009 he and his family were led to pray for the redemption of the “spiritual inheritance” of Rees Howells and to attend the church that was meeting in one of the buildings on the Bible College of Wales site. When the Bible College of Wales moved to England in July 2009, he felt that God also wanted to restore the “physical site” of the Bible College of Wales as part of the inheritance of Rees Howells. In April 2011 he received a call from the Lord to establish his own ministry “The Forge”, to raise up spiritual “blacksmiths” who know how to handle the fire of God and to forge the sword of the Word (see 1 Samuel 13 v.19) in order to pursue this calling – see www.theforgewales.org.uk for more information.

Then, we believe in answer to his prayers and the prayers of many others, in September 2011 a small team of pastors from Cornerstone Community Church in Singapore, led by Pastor Yang Tuck Yoong, came on a short visit to Wales, England and other parts of Europe. Their assignment was to dig and re-open the old ancient wells of revival in Europe and to pray at the very places where revival broke out in the early 1900s. They visited the Bible College of Wales in Swansea and sought God for the future of the site known as “Derwen Fawr” (“Large Oak Tree” in Welsh). The Lord led them to purchase this site in December 2012.

Their first action was to open a church assembly on this site. Mark Ritchie was appointed as the pastor and was also given the oversight and local responsibility for the physical restoration of the site. They are now re-laying the foundation of intercession, teaching and mission established by Rees Howells. Mark believes that the Bible College of Wales will be raised up again as a centre of the fire of revival which will break out all over Wales and the world!

It was a real blessing for us to be able to attend the weekly prayer meeting on Tuesday morning that is now held on the Derwen Fawr site to pray for the restoration of the inheritance of Rees Howells and the Bible College of Wales. Mark Ritchie led the meeting which was truly anointed by the Holy Spirit. About 50 Christians from many church and national backgrounds were assembled there - all with a heart for revival. The presence of the Lord was strong and the intercession was powerful. Several intercessors prayed for us personally as representatives of Germany and for the German nation!

For more information on the Bible College of Wales visit the website:
www.csc.org.sg/wales/bible-college-of-wales .

We pray that all these fires of revival in Wales will spread to Germany and connect with the work of the Holy Spirit in this nation and throughout Europe and the world.

Margaret and Phil Daniell



SportingMarvels Rhondda



Hauptgebäude (ehem. Bible College of Wales)



Garten (ehem. Bible College of Wales)