

# History of Coedpoeth Evangelical Church

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## Origins

In the immediate post-war years four newly converted men, stirred with concern for the lost around them, began to preach the gospel in the Brynteg area, some 3 miles from Wrexham. One of the men who had a haulage business used one of his trucks in the enterprise. With the use of loud-speakers, many came under the sound of the gospel. These men were not theologically trained; but what they did possess was a heart aflame for the Lord Jesus Christ. God blessed the work and a number of people were converted. There was a real sense of the presence of God.

An old army hut transported by lorry was erected in Brynteg. The work became known as Rockwood Mission. Services were started and large numbers of children attended the Sunday School. Indeed the numbers were so large that four double-decker buses were needed for what became the annual Sunday School trip to Rhyl.



Such a work, fuelled with a love for souls, cannot continue long without a similar burden for other areas. The men were aware of the need that existed in the nearby village of Coedpoeth, some 2 miles away. Little did they know that in the providence of God Miss Winnie Davies had for some years been praying for a gospel witness in the village. Born in Coedpoeth and trained at Emmanuel Bible College, Birkenhead, she had been sent as a missionary to the then Belgian Congo with W.E.C. Whilst on furlough she happened to come across building activity. On investigation she found that the erection of an army hut transported from Oswestry was to become the basis of a gospel witness to the locality. It is said that on hearing this news, she knelt at the site and gave humble praise to God. The Lord had answered her prayer.

The Mission, as the work was known, commenced in June 1954 with an opening service. Both Miss Davies and the Rev Billy Hardy (St Helens) were present. Crowds queued to enter the building.

God had begun a new work in Coedpoeth. From its inception Mr Arthur Richards became increasingly involved in the work. The work concentrated upon children with a large Sunday School and weekly Bible club. Mr Richards also visited in the area regularly. Many have

cause to thank God for those early days. The local chapels had by and large succumbed to modernism and were mere 'shadows' of what they once were. Chapels continue to close at an alarming rate in the village. In recent years a Welsh Baptist Church, a Welsh Methodist Church and more recently both Rehoboth and Salem have closed their doors.



**Winnie Davies and  
Revd Billy Hardy**

During the subsequent decades the work fluctuated. For a brief period in the '80s the Rev Chris Rogers became the pastor, introducing a new constitution and the Christian Hymns hymn book. The Church was taught and began to embrace the doctrines of grace. After Mr Rogers' departure for Liverpool, the Church further declined in membership to 5 members.

Concerned about the state of the Church, the members wisely sought help from the local evangelical churches. After a series of consultative meetings and the supervision of the work by a committee, Gwersyllt Congregational Church agreed to take over the work. In April 1989, under the guidance of the Rev Richard Davies (pastor at Gwersyllt), an agreement was reached which involved the Church at Coedpoeth coming under Gwersyllt's "pastoral wing". This in effect meant that Mr Davies became the pastor of both churches. The officers of Coedpoeth stood down as part of the agreement. The members at Coedpoeth were given dual membership.

In course of time believers in the area began to attend the afternoon service. There were some conversions. Neil Pfeiffer, an elder at Gwersyllt, began increasingly to feel a call to the ministry. This was duly recognised by the Church at Gwersyllt. This recognition coincided with Coedpoeth's search for a man to lead God's flock, and consequently, under the Lord, he was asked to be its pastor. He was inducted on October 1992 at a chapel hired for the occasion.

We give thanks to God for the way that He directed both churches over this matter. Truly this furnishes us with an example of how a larger fellowship can help a struggling cause.

During the eleven years of Mr Pfeiffer's pastorate, full Lord's Day worship services were restored and a thoroughly biblical preaching ministry was maintained. The church saw some

numerical increase and adherence to Scriptural doctrine was consolidated. There were conversions and baptisms during this period.

In 2003 Pastor Pfeiffer sensed the call of God to South Wales (Llansamlet). After a short interregnum Mr Martin Hagget responded to the call to become Pastor at Coedpoeth. He is assisted by Mr David Griffiths, who has served faithfully for many years as Elder, and by two deacons.

We have been encouraged in recent years by the addition of a number of younger families and especially by some conversions and baptisms.

Coedpoeth is to be found on the A525 road linking Wrexham with the towns of Ruthin and Denbigh. It is some 3 - 4 miles from Wrexham. Coedpoeth itself is a large village of about 5,000 inhabitants. Its environs include Minera, Bwlchgwyn (considered to be the highest village in Wales), Gwynfryn and Southsea. Although Welsh has declined somewhat, a sizeable Welsh-speaking community still exists, with a Welsh primary school continuing to expand. The chapels which still exist bear testimony to a bygone era of spiritual blessing. Williams 'Y Wern' preached in the area and his ministry was used to the conversion of many. His grave is only a mile away in the Wern village. It was said that Coedpoeth was so imbued with a godly spirit that men would not even be found smoking in public on a Sunday.

Despite the present spiritual climate, we thank God that there is a witness still in this village. We are at present 25 members with a congregation averaging 30 - 35 meeting at the morning and evening services. We seek especially to invite unbelievers to our evening service when we endeavour to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ simply and clearly.

Two Sunday School classes take place on the Lord's Day afternoon. Although it is difficult to persuade parents to send their children on a regular basis, we are grateful to God for the opportunity to teach those who do come. During the week we hold a ladies meeting on a Friday with a brief evangelistic message, Bible clubs for children aged 5-13 and a parents and toddlers work on a Tuesday morning.

We long to see souls saved. A "Village Messenger" leaflet is produced three or four times a year and distributed to homes in the vicinity of the Church.



Revd Maurice Roberts at the June 1999 Anniversary services

Our mid-week Bible Study and prayer meeting takes place on Tuesday evening and is well attended. We also meet twice a year on a Saturday for a Day of Prayer. We recognise that we can expect to see no true blessing upon our worship and witness without a constant looking to the Lord in prayer – both in private and corporately.

We believe that our public worship both on the Lord's day and midweek should be such as to be worthy of the holy and gracious God whom we seek to serve. Reverence is thus fundamental. The preaching of the Word is at the heart of our worship. The King James Version (for public reading) and New King James Version (pulpit exposition) of the Bible are regularly used.

The preaching ministry follows a generally systematic, expository method. During the present pastorate Philippians, Mark, Habakkuk, 2 Peter, Zechariah and Philemon have been studied. Shorter more thematically based series have included "God's Questions", "The Things Which Keep People from Coming to Christ" and "Worship".

We would value your prayers especially for the following:

1. That the Lord would further consolidate the work in Coedpoeth through the spiritual growth of the people of God.
2. That the Lord would save those whom we have the privilege of ministering to.
3. That the Lord would raise up those gifted to reach out to the village and beyond.