



Community work at Hivings Free Church, Chesham

In the summer of 2003 the church was approached by the Buckinghamshire Adult Learning Group to consider allowing a 'Smarter Café' computer class to work on its premises. As this seemed to be in line with church policy to engage with and assist the local community wherever possible, this was agreed. In October 2003 'Smarter Café' was launched in North Chesham.

For 6 years they took just one day per week. The course was very popular from the start and over time has gained so many members that this year, from the beginning of the Autumn Term, they now meet for two days, starting at 9.30am. Tuesday, for 3 full sessions, finishing at 3.30pm and Friday, for 4 sessions, packing up at around 4.30pm. Not only have these courses been open to, and of use to the general public, but church members have benefitted as well.

A lady from the church kindly helps out with refreshments during the Friday sessions. Mention must be made of the faithful and expert work done by Nigel Ridge and Christine Gilford who are the course tutors. Their work is very much appreciated and their dedication to the task is highly commendable.



'Smarter Café's' literature says, "The concept of 'Smarter Café' is to bring learning into the community and to offer you, the learner, the opportunity to learn new skills in a relaxed friendly

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BMS World mission

environment with the advantages of greater flexibility than an Adult Learning Centre. You may choose the frequency of your visits... if you are unable to attend one week, you do not miss the lesson; on your next visit you simply pick up where you left off”.

A wide range of courses includes Cameras and Computers; Desktop Publishing; Spreadsheets and PowerPoint all for beginners through to Intermediate Word Processing; Working with Windows and Introduction to Photoshop Elements.

At the present time there are 20 learners and 70 active regulars booked up on the courses. And also 30 on the waiting list.

We at Hivings are pleased to support this community work and have a good relationship with the course leaders and many who attend.

Bill Reynolds, Hivings Free

SWINE FLU

For some helpful guidelines about how to do church if swine flu breaks out around you, take a look at the suggestions from Parish Nursing – via the CBA website

www.centralba.org.uk

WILL YOU PRAY WITH US?



Kingsley Appiagyei, the President of the Baptist Union, writes,

“The agenda for the 21 November Prayer Call is that we can have a river of prayer across our Baptist family for our beloved nation. Below are some suggestions:

PREPARATION

That each Sunday from November 1st churches will spend 5-10 minutes to talk about the November Prayer Day and also pray for our local communities, cities and nation, to help build the momentum towards the 21st November.

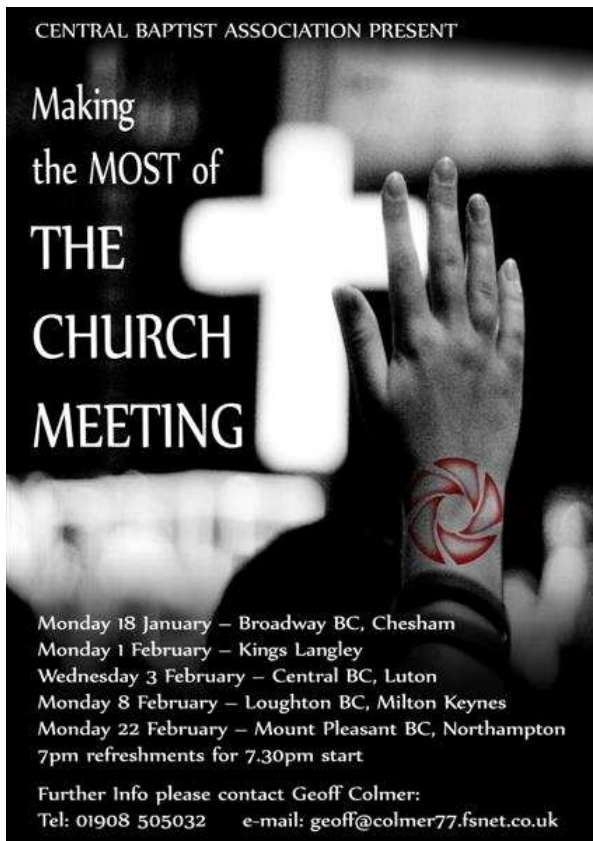
The foundation for this is that revival will start with us first on a personal level, then spread in our Churches, then our cities, local communities and then the nation.

For more information, see Baptist Union website **www.baptist.org.uk**

And of course you can also pray any day.

CENTRAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION PRESENT

Making
the MOST of
THE
CHURCH
MEETING



Monday 18 January – Broadway BC, Chesham
Monday 1 February – Kings Langley
Wednesday 3 February – Central BC, Luton
Monday 8 February – Loughton BC, Milton Keynes
Monday 22 February – Mount Pleasant BC, Northampton
7pm refreshments for 7.30pm start

Further Info please contact Geoff Colmer:
Tel: 01908 505032 e-mail: geoff@colmer77.fsnet.co.uk

Have you ever heard someone say, 'I'll never go to another church meeting as long as I live!' I have, and I may just have said it myself, except that it's a bit unrealistic as a Baptist minister! But also I've heard people say of a church meeting, 'God's presence was so real that night - it was amazing!' And something like that's been my experience as well!

Last year we held a training event, 'When Christians Disagree', and this struck a chord with many people in our churches. The fact is disagreement can be most obvious when we are in the process of making a decision, and the place where this is most often focussed is the Church Meeting.

It's not surprising that the Church Meeting gets a bad press. But it really can be a high point in the church's life.

So, what makes for a great church meeting? When it isn't so great, what happened? And how can we make all our church meetings work better for us?

In keeping with other training events we've held, this evening won't be the cure for all our ills! However, through thinking about why we do what we do, and what we might do that would make a difference, we really do expect this to be a worthwhile evening.

Mon 18 January - Broadway BC, Chesham
Monday 1 February - Kings Langley BC
Wednesday 3 February - Central BC, Luton
Mon 8 February - Loughton BC, M. Keynes
Monday 22 February - Mount Pleasant BC,
Northampton

If this is an area of church life which you'd like to take another look at, then it would be great to see you. It isn't limited to deacons, elders, and those with leadership responsibility, but is of particular interest to them. There is no cost but it would be very helpful if you could let us know when you are attending by emailing Geoff Colmer at geoff@colmer77.fsnet.co.uk.

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Help! I'm A Deacon
Saturday April 17th, 2010
Look out for details

Who says

people outside the church don't sing? If you've been watching "The Choir" on television you'll know that singing is back in a big way! It's good for the community and for health. (So long as you aren't coughing over people!) What is more, the programme was filmed in our patch at South Oxhey, and one of our ministers, Steve Hobbis, was part of the choir. It was inspiring stuff.



And recently, up in Northamptonshire, as a Forum activity, we followed suit, with a Sunday evening called The Big Sing at Mount Pleasant Baptist in Northampton. We sent out invitations that could be given to neighbours and friends, and people from 8 churches came along.

We sang our hearts out and listened to the musicians and testimonies and readings in between. We chose fairly well known hymns and tunes, bearing in mind that people outside the churches know *Amazing Grace* and *Abide with me*, and *Be still my soul*, more than they would know some newer songs.

The sound was amazing! We even got the congregation into parts for the evening! None of this could have happened without the wonderful help of Mount Pleasant's technicians, musicians and Bridget.

All 43 Northamptonshire Baptist churches received a copy of the CD afterwards, to use either in their worship or to take to people who don't get out to services.

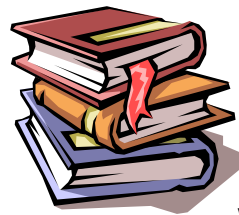
We'll definitely do it again next year, perhaps in a different part of the county. And if anyone out there would like to host such an evening in another county, do get in touch.
Helen Wordsworth

TRAINING WITH REGENTS

Understanding & Using the Bible

This course over two Saturdays, explores these and other questions central to our life as Christians and offers ways to help us learn more from reading the Bible so that the Bible is more central to our lives.

Saturdays 6th February & 27th March
2010
10am to 4:45pm



**Mount Pleasant
Baptist Church,
Northampton**

with Revd Brian Howden,
Baptist Minister and former College Tutor

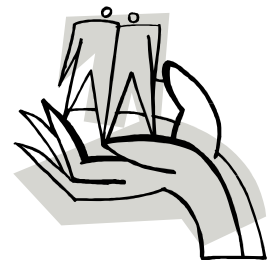
Pastoral Care

If you are involved in caring for others this course is for you. It will explore the principles and purpose of pastoral care and help develop the skills needed to care for others more effectively.

Wednesday Evenings, 7:30 - 9:30
Jan 27th; Feb 3rd, 10th, 24th; Mar 3rd & 10th

**Princes Risborough
Baptist Church**

Carol Murray &
Anthony Clarke,
Pastoral Studies
Tutors at
Regent's Park
College



£35 for either course (£25 if unwaged)

to book a place contact Anthony Clarke
01865 288120,
anthony.clarke@regents.ox.ac.uk

Parent & Toddlers

I write this article with a real sense of awe and amazement at God's timing. Those that know me best know that I have the endearing quality of something like a bull in a china shop once an idea grabs me. But despite all the snorting and charging this article is about what can happen when we let God hold the stopwatch.

Chipperfield is a small village church of a dozen members. My family and I came here at the end of August 2007 and the congregation won't mind me saying, we needed to focus on effectively serving different areas of the community.

Of course we tried various things with differing levels of success. However after a discussion with Stephen Copson and Rachel Tole (Home Mission Grants Manager) we became aware that we had missed an opportunity.

We were about to launch a "Parent and Toddler" group and our heart was to provide the best we possibly could. Rachel suggested we apply for a "Mission Project Grant" which was duly awarded.



Our aim was to offer a safe, friendly environment for Parents and Toddlers to come to the church and see we are a caring, loving and diverse group. Many

church members find their way to the group because quite frankly it is a great place to be.

With the grant we have been able to cover our initial start-up costs, invest in brightening up the play area and making sure we had plenty for the kids to do. With our limited funds and without the grant we would have found it very difficult to make the group as welcoming as it is.

At the same time, the government's Sure Start scheme had just started in the area and they were so impressed by what we had achieved that they are now working alongside us to provide more services to the community. The church is now open more often and is being used on a regular basis by Sure Start for their work in the village.

The group attracts many parents and toddlers than we would have imagined and even now we have seen some venture into the Sunday mornings.

Faith and energy is one thing. Patience, God's timing and the support of our Baptist family is quite another.

Jason Gain, Minister in training

[If you would like to know more about Mission Project Grants, then get in touch with Helen Wordsworth on 01788 817292 or helen.w@centralba.org.uk]

All material for the next issue of the Newsletter should be given to Stephen Copson by February 28th, 2010

MINISTERS ADVANCE ALMOST IN RETREAT

The annual Ministers' Conference took place at King's Park, Northampton, from 12th-14th October. In recent years such events have had a theme, which was addressed in different ways by different speakers. This year the conference was advertised as a retreat.

It was led by Roy Searle, founder member of the Northumbria Community and a past President of the Baptist Union, under the title '*Ways of living the Great Commandment; Loving God, Self and Others*'. Morning Prayers (before breakfast!) were different from previous years in that we used the Daily Office of the Northumbria Community.

During the sessions Roy communicated a great deal of material (I have never known anyone get through so many points so quickly!) in an engaging style, with a variety of stories from his broad experience in this country and abroad.

Retreats usually include some time and space for reflection and there was plenty of opportunity for this on the Tuesday. King's Park is on an industrial estate but there are acres of parkland just five minutes walk away and the weather could not have been better.

Of course, the sessions, however good, are only a part of any conference. There was also the welcome opportunity to renew old friendships and to make new ones, not least over the superb meals.

All in all, this was a stimulating and worthwhile event, and the fact that it became more of a conference and less of a retreat didn't seem to matter to people I spoke to.

Finally, I pass on one thing that struck me and may help you - this question asked of Roy by Richard Foster, the author of several books on prayer; 'what are you and God working on at the moment?'

John Matthews, Hitchin

For information about Jorge Damasceno's cross-cultural mission work amongst Portuguese speaking people, go to

<http://incarnate-network.eu/stories/video/jorge-damasceno-portuguese-church-planting-video-uk>

Ministerial movements

Into CBA

Elaine Cockbill to Sundon Park, Luton
Andrew Gale, chaplain at Oakhill Secure Training Centre, Milton Keynes
David Haseldine, minister in training, Totteridge High Wycombe
Irene Inness to Farthingstone, lay pastor
Paul Knight to Tove Valley
Dave Lockwood to Hertford
Sam Owoo to Hivings Free, Chesham
Kevin Price, minister in training Ringstead

Out of CBA

Andrew Keith, Leavesden Road Watford to Lenton Nottingham
Alasdair Macleod, Bushey to Billericay
Wendy Manley, Farthingstone, retired
Mary Stringer Berkhamsted to retirement
E.Gwynne Parry to Wirral in retirement
Keith Rudman, Ramridge Luton to Uckfield
David Tatem (URC) from Christ the Cornerstone, Milton Keynes

COUNCIL NOTES

At its October meeting the CBA council continued to push ahead with the new Strategy for the Association 'Walking together in Ministry and Mission'
Among the issues covered were

- **The establishment of a Training Fund** to assist individuals attend courses and Training events which will assist them in their church's ministry.. Details of how to apply will be available soon. Further funds for other purposes will be released in the coming year.
- **The acceptance of a £38,000 deficit budget** as part of our commitment to continue to serve the churches without any cutbacks in the Regional Ministry team. Much of this deficit is due to the low interest rates currently on offer
- **Promotion opportunities available for members of local churches to share in the wider work of the Association** as Council members, representatives on external bodies, of the Employment Group and as Home Mission Champions. Nominations for Council are currently being invited and churches are being asked to encourage suitable candidates.
- **CBA Assembly** in 2010 will have David Kerrigan, General Director of BMS as the Keynote speaker and in 2011 our speaker will be Rev Dr Pat Took who will be BUGB President

The next Council will be on 24th January **Graham Clarke (Moderator)**

RESOURCES

*** Build ***

Baptist Union Initiative with people with Learning Disabilities Conference to be held on **Saturday 6th March 2010** at Central Baptist Church, Luton.

Book the date. More details available soon. Or to register an early interest, email d.buckingham@northern.org.uk

** CHRISTMAS and Schools **

An imaginative and friendly way of linking church and school at Christmas

<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/62365.id>

or contact Wayne Dixon of Slough Baptist church for a viewing opportunity 30th November to 4th December

[www.sloughbaptistchurch.org.uk/schools week](http://www.sloughbaptistchurch.org.uk/schools_week)

*** CAFÉ CHURCH ***

For ideas, training opportunities and inspiration, go to

<http://www.cafechurch.net/>

*** Gift Aid toolkit update ***

HMRC has produced a March 2009 update of the Gift Aid Toolkit CD-ROM for charities. Copies can be obtained by ringing 08453 02 02 03 (open from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday) and selecting Option 6