

FOCUS

*The newsletter of the Eastern Baptist Association
Edition 17 : January – April 2009*



FOCUS 17 bids farewell and thanks to its previous editor John Smith as he takes up the role of Senior Pastor at Godmanchester Baptist church in the new year. We are so grateful to him for all he has done and wish him every blessing in his new challenge – happily he remains within the EBA ‘patch’ and we look forward to news of God doing great things.

In this edition we have details of EBA training events for anyone involved in, or seeking to be involved with young people and/or leadership.

As usual there is a round-up of news from around the churches and organisations – please do keep sending in your stories – it is great to share what is happening – we serve an Awesome God!

Items for the next edition of **Focus** to:
jill.mayes@easternbaptist.org.uk
by March 1st 2009

A downloadable version of **Focus 17** can be found at:
www.easternbaptist.org.uk/downloads

Full details of all EBA events and training can be found at:

www.easternbaptist.org.uk/events

The Eastern Baptist Association is a member of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and a supporter of BMS World Mission

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Safe to Grow Training

Child Protection for those working with under 18's



Saturday 31st January 9.30 – 1.00
Wymondham Baptist Church

Saturday 7th March 9.30 – 1.00
Chelmsford, Central Baptist Church

Saturday 28th March 9.30 – 1.00
Earl's Hall Baptist Church, Westcliff on Sea

Spring Training Events 2009

Healthy Church

Supporting Leaders in the Local Church

For anyone involved or interested in any leading roles in church life – ministers, deacons, group leaders

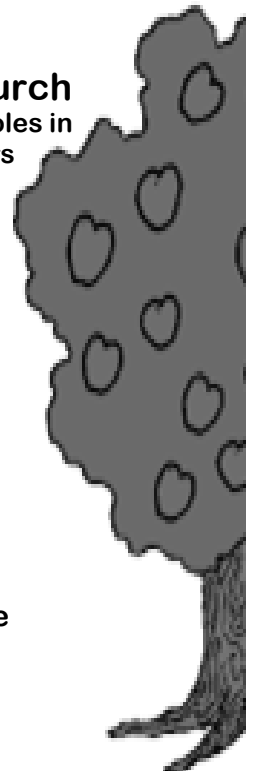
Tuesday March 10th
Wymondham Baptist Church
Garland Street Baptist, Bury St Edmunds
Braintree Baptist Church

Thursday March 12th
Fakenham Community Baptist Church
Colchester Road Baptist Church, Ipswich
Westcliff on Sea Baptist Church

Thursday March 19th
London Road Baptist Church, Lowestoft
Histon Baptist Church, Histon nr Cambridge

Monday March 23rd
Ardleigh Green Baptist Church, Ardleigh

All events start with refreshments at 7pm



To reserve a space on any of these events contact Jill Mayes
jill.mayes@easternbaptist.org.uk Tel: 01953 607938

Help 'drops in' to Manea

Manea is a small village in the rural Cambridgeshire Fens. MBF's minister – Louise Hearn felt called to offer an opportunity for anyone – but especially the elderly – to drop in for a home cooked meal and 'spiritual food' and with the help of a BUGB grant the Drop In Centre was born. The popularity of the centre was significant and soon was bringing the gospel to about 36 people. The Drop In Centre grew in numbers but more importantly grew spiritually, and for more than two years, has included prayer, Bible reading and a short talk every Wednesday.



Children and Leaders from Norton Baptist Church at their Autumn Bible Holiday Club.

Norton celebrates it's 175th Anniversary in 2009.

Former ministers have been invited to return to lead services throughout the year.

But time moves on and Louise has been called to serve elsewhere and without Louise and Ian the Drop In Centre was unable to operate due to lack of volunteers. Another church in Manea offered to take over the work but when the last meeting came were suddenly unable to find volunteers.

With heavy hearts the decision was taken to close. As the final celebration lunch was being prepared a lady walked in to the kitchen and said "Hello, I live in the village and wondered if I could help at the Drop In

Centre, I've been involved in running one like this in my old village, I have my health and safety certificate and I could do the cooking if needed." Yes, even though we had given up hope, God had not. He knew that we needed a special sort of person and so He sent us the right one and He did it when it was clear that our human efforts were not successful, He did it for His glory. Who says miracles don't happen today?

Are you a Yeepee?

"Young-Elderly-Energetic-People-Into-Everything"

A visit to Chelmsford by the Fresh Horizons team visited Chelmsford inspired Nancy Powell-Davies (Christ Church, Coggleshall) and David and Mari Thompson (Burlington BC, Ipswich) to get active and involved with one of their many projects. The EBA participants spent a week at St. Mark's BC, Easton, a culturally diverse area of Bristol helping with a wide range of renovation work. Volunteers from other areas also

took part although the EBA 'team' felt one or two more people would have made an even greater difference. They now look forward to their next adventure!

Fresh Horizons is a BUGB initiative to give purpose and significance to the 'active retired' acknowledging their wealth of skills and experience which can make a huge contribution to mission and ministry.

Putting the FUN into fundraising

Winter Gardens Baptist Church is a small fellowship situated on Canvey Island. During the past few months we have been very involved in raising money towards a Minister in Training.

As well as the obvious financial benefits the fellowship have enjoyed a time of witnessing to our Lord Jesus, working and having fellowship with each other and that of other churches and our near neighbours.

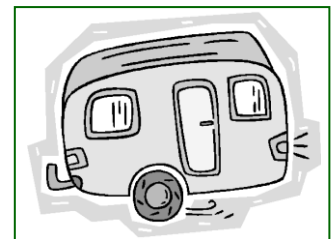
So far we have held a Bootsale, Cream Tea and Art Exhibition, Freshly made Doughnut morning and sale and Quiz Nights. Soon to come is a Mince Pie and Art Exhibition, a Tea at the Ritz (Winter Gardens style) a Burns Night, Valentines Day Special

and a Tramps Supper. We are aiming to hold at least one fund raising event each month throughout the year. Much of what we have been able to achieve has been due to a BUGB grant which was a tremendous blessing.

A large tent was also purchased for outdoor events and helped towards the cost of "Tough Talk" attending Winter Gardens last November.

In the summer some of us had fun being sponsored to grow a sunflower, this money was given to BMS a long with money raised at our Harvest Famine Lunch.

I hope this will inspire other fellowships to think of ways to raise fund for a project



The Baptist Caravan Fellowship are holding their South-East Reunion at Colchester Baptist Church, Eld Lane, Colchester on Saturday February 21st from 11.00 am to 6.00 pm. You can come and go at any time in that time span.

Why not come and join us and find out more about what we do? A warm welcome awaits you. The cost for the day is £6 including a hot lunch being provided by a catering team from the church.

Please contact Tony Cock on 01359 241541 or email cockant2@btinternet.com for further information or to let us know you're coming so we can be sure there's enough food!

"Our vision is to see God's kingdom grow in the East of England through..."



Anyone for freshly cooked doughnuts? Just one of the creative fundraising ideas used by Winter Gardens BC.

Final Celebration event for Maidstone Road



Maidstone Road Baptist Church have been celebrating their bicentenary with a whole series of events.

The final celebration hosted by MRBC was a Community Day held at Causton Junior School, supported by the local Anglican and Methodist fellowships and some 16 other invited organisations.

The day celebrated God's faithfulness to MRBC and the ways in which the various organisations are involved in local community life.

Experience the New Testament

Experience? How do we experience the Bible?

For many years Walk Thru the Bible ministries have been leading people on a journey through the Bible that helps them to engage and understand in deeper and more meaningful ways.

Don't be put off by the six hour time slot – the day is structured to make learning enjoyable – time will fly by.

You will find out:

... what happened in the 400 year 'gap' between Malachi and Matthew, when God appeared to be silent.

... the context of the New Testament, the geography, the history, the culture

... how all the main steps in Jesus' life and ministry fit

together in order

... how the early church was born and how it spread further afield

... Paul's missionary journeys – where he went and what happened in each place

Please join us for a day to remember!

**Kingswood Baptist Church,
Codenhall Straight, Basildon
SS26 5DH**

**Saturday 21st February 2009
9.30am – 5.30pm**

**Drinks provided – bring your own
packed lunch and a pen**

Cost: £12 (includes handbook)

**Details & Booking: Peter
Willson T: 01268 452197**

**.... healthy churches,
living as wholesome
communities and
engaging in relevant
mission."**

Youth Leaders get together.

The very first youth leaders' get-together happened on Thursday 27th November at Central Baptist Church, Chelmsford.

Youth leaders from across Essex were invited for an informal time of sharing and praying for each other and getting to know what's going on in their area of the association. Those who attended, hopefully went away feeling encouraged and part of a bigger family.

The next Essex get-together is planned for June 11th 2009.

The plan is to have more of these across the region so keep your eyes open an invite might be coming your way soon.

For more details contact Hayley Beckett
youth@easternbaptist.org.uk

Soul Space at St. Andrew's Street

St. Andrew's Street Baptist Church in Cambridge has turned its evening services into "Soul Space".

"It's like church with a twist.

Here at St. A's we want to create space for anyone and everyone to explore the spiritual side to life. Whether you're a big time church regular, someone who's never

even stepped inside the building or just looking for a break from the normal weekly routine, you're always welcome!"

It's a different approach to "church". You might like to look at the website, and please do pray for this new venture.

<http://www.notjustbreathing.com/Welcome.html>

Task Groups on Target!

The new structures of the EBA have got off to a good start!

Two Council meetings have seen the formation of the new task groups to support churches and ministers in their mission and ministry. Ministry, Mission Strategy, Youth, World Mission and Finance are already looking at ways to enhance the lives

of our churches. for further developments as the groups meet and assess the needs in their particular areas of responsibility.

Brian Purton, Tudor Parsons, Margie Clarke, Paul Corson and Steven Hembery head up the different groups.

Pray for them, please, and look out for what comes next!

How to contact the EBA Regional Ministers

Paul Hills: paul.hills@easternbaptist.org.uk 01223 890141
Richard Lewis: richard.lewis@easternbaptist.org.uk 01842 754953
Sheila Martin: sheila.martin@easternbaptist.org.uk 01268 571213

Kornerstone@mbc - youth worship event

Friday December 12th saw a second 'mini Soul Survivor' worship event at Mildenhall Baptist Church.

Details of similar future events from Judith Squires 01842 861457

An evening with Amanda Roocroft

Award winning opera singer Amanda Roocroft has recorded a double CD in aid of the Bluntisham Baptist Church renewal project.



Copies @ £10 available from events@bluntishambaptist.org or 07787 901455

Focus snippets

Leigh Road Baptist Church

headed up a Fairtrade Fair at the Community Centre in Leigh-on-Sea in November.

The fellowship is committed to raising awareness of Fairtrade, guaranteeing a better deal for Third World producers.

Norton Baptist Church

in Suffolk has a 3-bedroomed Manse for rent.



The lease duration is subject to negotiation and rent currently stands at £400 per calendar month.

More information from Roger Allum: 01359 230093
roger.allum@tiscali.co.uk

Once again young people from Mildenhall Baptist Church

helped Operation Christmas Child with their annual 'shoe-box' appeal.

The charity, Samaritans Purse, organises the delivery of shoe boxes filled with everyday essentials and small gifts to children who are victims of war, poverty, famine, disease and natural disaster. Where appropriate, they also share the Good News of Jesus.

David Chambers, one of the ENERGIZE leaders said "This really brings home to the youngsters how privileged they are to live in a society where they can expect lots of gifts at Christmas, while most of these children have never received one present and the gift of a shoe box really lights up their world and shows them that someone, many miles away, whom they have never met, cares about them."



Youth Weekend For 11-16 year olds Sheringham Youth Hostel

13th-15th February 2009

A weekend of fun, fellowship, worship and practical teaching for your Youth Group.

Cost: £60 per person

More Details from Hayley Beckett

T: 01263 824389

E: youth@easternbaptist.org.uk

Southgate via West Mersea



This is not the heading for a slightly gone wrong search on Multimap or a (very expensive) SatNav system once again taking its own special set of directions.

Southgate Church in Bury-St-Edmunds has just appointed its new minister, Peter Gibson who has been

serving at West Mersea Free Church.

The induction will be on Friday evening 6th March 2009 – Southgate is an ecumenical church based in a community centre and that was the only time the centre was free!

Peter and his wife Audrey will move towards the end of February and the church at Southgate is eagerly looking forward to their arrival.

Of course, this also means

Recharge is now in its 7th year and it has seen many young people changed by God and encouraged by 'just being' with other youngsters.

Leaders of smaller youth groups have found it especially encouraging – meeting other young Christians from across the region, having the use of facilities and resources often only available to larger, more financially well off groups and taking part in dynamic and creative teaching and worship has had a significant impact on their groups.

If you're involved with young people please do join us – whether you bring along 2 or 22 – we believe it will be a time of great blessing!

Contact Hayley (see left) for more information.

the church at West Mersea will be saying farewell to Peter and Audrey after a lengthy and profitable ministry.

Please pray for the two churches that the future might be bright and fruitful for them both.

Bob explores at NCBC

Throughout October, November and December, Norwich Central Baptist Church ran a course that explores the big questions of life and helps people find out about the Christian faith.

The course, called *Christianity Explored*, started with meal in the church followed by a series of DVDs and short discussions in a friendly environment.

Bob Whitlam attended last

year's *Christianity Explored* course. Bob has lived in Norwich all his life and started attending Norwich Central Baptist Church in 2007. Bob says, "I found the church a very friendly place and the course brought me a deeper understanding about God. I am 71 years old and have grown in my faith since going on the course. You are never too old to learn!"



Bob Whitlam outside NCBC in Norwich

Details of future courses or events from 01603 760497
www.norwichcentral.org