



**BRISTOL
CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP**

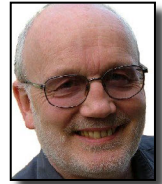
EQUIPPING CHRISTIANS
TO BUILD CHURCHES
TO CHANGE OUR WORLD

BCF NEWS

February 2009

Getting there from here

Dave Day explains the changes ahead for BCF



Over the next few weeks, we want to take opportunities to explain some of the changes we are anticipating in BCF. In doing so, we will give all the chance to hear about, comment on and question some of the things that the leaders have been talking and praying about for some time. I will précis our journey thus far in this article from a paper that the leadership team has drawn up. I will talk about it at the end of Devotion and ask you to join us for a forum on Monday 23 February at the Blackhorse Centre. Hopefully there will be ample time to read about our thoughts, discuss them in cells and ask me, or any of the leadership team any questions that occur to you. I hope you will appreciate that whilst giving an idea of the next steps on our journey, we do not have all the answers to every question; it might well be that you have questions that we have not yet fully considered. It is a step of faith and we invite all who are part of BCF to join us on this journey so that we can 'equip Christians to build churches to change our world'.

BCF must change

In any church community, change and growth are the evidence of life. In BCF we have changed what we do and how we do it many times and this is true of churches throughout history. The only constant is our commitment to be a worshipping, missional group of disciples. This will not change. Prophetic words and dreams, from Sue Mitchell and many others, have challenged us to be ready to move on. *“You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Break camp and advance...”* (Deut 1:6-7)

What is driving this change?

Our values remain constant, but we need to find fresh ways of expressing them, relevant to the times we live in. Above all we need to hear again Jesus’ command to make disciples. We need to see an increasing number of lives transformed as we live out the good news of the gospel.

The goal: a missional movement of networked churches

After more than a year of discussion and prayer, with careful listening to what has been said by BCFers, and having talked with our advisory team (Andy Au, Billy Kennedy, David Lawrence and Mac) we believe that we need to start to commission groups of people to develop fresh expressions of BCF in different parts of Bristol and its nearby areas; each one a unique mission community with a heartbeat of worship and prayer, having a character and rhythm of gatherings linked together by relationship, common values and a support leadership team.

First steps: Fresh expressions of church in Blackhorse, Aardv:ark and Thornbury

This process has already started. Tim Groves has been drawing together a group who want to build church in the Blackhorse area, and Pete Osborne has been developing a group based around those who attend Aardv:ark at the Ark. Tim has also been drawing together a group to explore a fresh expression of church in Thornbury and the surrounding area. We are also meeting with St Matthews Church team to explore the potential of working together for transformation in the area and the possible redevelopment of the Ark. Other expressions of BCF may follow.

Building projects

Our buildings must serve our mission. We are now committed to the redevelopment of the Blackhorse site and plans are being drawn up. It will provide a place for the Blackhorse group to meet but also a place for community and cultural events and the Crossways nursery. We are

currently exploring the rationale and implications of redeveloping the Ark in partnership with St Matthews in order to engage more fully with young professionals, the hospitals and the student community. Aardv:ark will be able to use the redeveloped Ark as a base.

This involves everyone

- We all have opportunities to communicate the love of God in a society where people are increasingly lonely and lost. We need to renew our personal relationship with God and find a new faith and confidence in the ability of our message to change lives.
- Where is God calling you? Who will you build church with, and where?
- Having made some broad-brush decisions, we can all play a part in shaping what happens.

Next Steps

- In a Sunday meeting soon, we will be commissioning the Blackhorse, Aardv:ark and Thornbury groups.
- After July we will no longer be meeting at the Grange. The Blackhorse group will find a temporary base while the building is completed and the Aardv:ark group will continue to meet at the Ark. At this stage it is envisaged that the Severn Side (Thornbury) group will be exploring distinct mid-week gatherings rather than Sunday community events. We would ask you to consider if you should be part of one of these groups.
- If you are not sure what to do, talk with your cell group leader or one of the leadership team. We are determined to help everyone who wants to move forward with us to find their place.
- Lots of things are still to be decided, such as how often the different groups might meet all together, and we'll keep communicating with you about this.
- There will be opportunity to discuss this further at a special meeting at the Blackhorse Centre on **23 February at 8.00 pm**.

By the time you read and hear this, your cell leaders should have already heard about it and had a chance to ask questions; please talk and pray about these steps in your cells. I feel very excited about the future of BCF. I realise that the changes will affect all to some degree and change can be scary. I want us to journey together to embrace God's future and destiny for us as church.

Crossways Preschool

Easter Fun Day – help wanted

Crossways Pre-School will be holding its Easter Family Fun Day on **Saturday 21 March** from 10am – 12 noon at the Blackhorse building. We would value help from other members of the church in this outreach to local families. We usually have around 150 people attending.

If you'd like to be involved please contact Sarah Bennett, Claire Wilson or Valerie Harding.

Looking for a house?

We are looking to either sell or rent out our 3 bed house in Kingswood in the next few months. It seems to be a hard time to sell at the moment through the usual estate agent channels and so we wanted to see if anyone in the church or anyone you know may be interested. Please contact Niall or Hannah Dunne for more info. Thanks

bsocs

Bristol School of Christian Studies

Is English law becoming anti-Christian?

Lecture by **Julian Rivers**

(Professor of Jurisprudence, University of Bristol)

Woodlands Christian Centre

Tuesday 3 March 2009, 7.30 pm £5

From civil partnerships to embryo research, human rights to Shariah law, this lecture will consider the legal changes of the last decade which have concerned so many Christians. It will seek to analyse and categorise the changes, setting them in the context of other legal and social developments in the UK and Europe. Since the question cannot be answered without some understanding of what 'Christian Law' might be, it will also sketch in a biblical basis for evaluating the legal environment in which we now find ourselves, and what - if anything - we might do about it.

we:network's website, www.wenetwork.co.uk, has gone live! Are you involved yet?

we:network's vision is to network all Christians and others for positive change in all spheres of life in the West of England (Bristol, Bath and old Avon) and beyond. There are many ways you can get involved. You can send in news and stories, and events for the calendar. You can write your opinions in the Discussion Forum.

The website has Action Zones for all spheres of life across the region: from Arts and Media, to Work and Business, Youth and Students, to help you network with others in a similar sphere of life.

There are also Directories, where you can list your network, project, organisation, business or church, and find out who's who. There are even sections for job and volunteering opportunities, and more!

Have a look on the website!

For further details contact:

Steve Sherwin steve.sherwin@wenetwork.co.uk

Penny Hopkins penny.hopkins@wenetwork.co.uk

(from Roger & Angie Allen)



Summer exchange wanted for Swiss 15 year old



Dylan, a French speaking, sporty and outgoing 15 year old boy is looking for an English family with a son of similar age (if possible), to spend 2 weeks with this summer to practise his English. Dylan's family would either pay for his keep or provide an opportunity for an exchange for your son in the village of Saillon – VS, a beautiful part of Switzerland surrounded by the Alps. Possible dates: any 2 weeks between 28 June and 14 August.

Dylan is very keen on speaking English and is studying English at school.

Hobbies: Guitar, Football, snowboarding, skiing and other sports.

For more information, contact his aunt, Isabelle Roberts.

Who's who in BCF

Peter and Helen Hill are profiled by CJ this month.

Peter and Helen have been married for nearly thirty years and have three daughters, Sarah (27), Josie (25) and Sophie (18).

Peter comes from the smart part of Kent, and Helen comes from the mining area of Derbyshire. They met at Bristol University on Helen's very first evening there. Peter says she sat at his feet and laughed at all his jokes - then! He was very shy at the time and really was not looking for a girlfriend! Although Peter was not brought up in a Christian household, his grandmother was a Christian and she was praying for him; he became a Christian when he was seventeen. (Good old Granny!) He was going to study Theology at Bristol and become a vicar but he changed his mind and did engineering instead. He now works for Rolls Royce as Rolls-Royce Fellow - Manufacturing Technology. This is an unusual role, asking "stupid" questions, provoking innovation, inventing new processes and trying to be child-like generally. He has won awards, got patents etc., but



mainly by avoiding all the things he is not very good at (he says). He has currently chosen to work only three days a week and finds it just as productive as doing more. His work ethic is to be significant rather than successful. He discovered some time ago that many Christian men didn't actually enjoy their jobs. This made him think, explore and experiment with what it means to try to be a creative Christian in the workplace and an inquisitive human in the church – what does all this mean and what am I going to do? In his spare time Peter likes to do DIY and ride his motorbike – a Moto Guzzi. He enjoys mechanical toys, computers clocks etc ... and asking questions!

Helen is one of three managers of One25. She used to be a solicitor but decided she would rather help less-privileged people. She loves nature and the great outdoors and is enjoying gardening, especially growing fruit and vegetables. She is also mad about history. Her father became a vicar when Helen was two years old, and her mum was (and still is) a feisty Christian. Helen went to a C of E boarding school where she heard a lot of scripture. She was introduced to the reality of the Holy Spirit when she was seventeen. This made 'A' level R.E. on the Acts and Paul's letters interesting for both Helen and her teacher.

Peter and Helen married as soon as she had finished at University. They lived in Olveston at first and then moved to Thornbury where Helen used to help Zoe Edbrooke with 'Tribes' in their house. They now live in Wotton-under-Edge in a rural area on top of a ridge. They are in the process of converting an outbuilding into a retreat room for people who need a break. They are also involved with Mutende, helping to co-ordinate the UK support – all help welcome! Peter and Helen like to spend time with their daughters and their new grandchild, Gwennan. She is the daughter of Sarah who is a medical doctor, married to Ed and living in Nottingham. Josie, who studied English at Sussex University, works with Helen at One25 doing their fund-raising and publicity. She was the development worker for Naomi House. In her spare time she runs a weekly book club and does Taekwondo. Sophie (in the picture) is at Leeds Metropolitan University studying Event Management. She loves cooking and won Bristol Junior Chef when she was sixteen. She enjoys socializing, debating and fashion.



Bristol Christian Fellowship

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BCF Diary February 2009

Sun 8	Devotion	10.00 am	The Grange School Children: start with adults then Junction
Sun 8	Zambia group	1.15 pm	Severn Ridge
Sun 15	Celebration (coffee 10.30 am)	11.00 am	The Grange School <i>Dave Day</i> Children: Energise
Sun 15	Aardv:ark	8.00 pm	The Ark <i>Money (Martin Parkes)</i>
Sun 22	Celebration (coffee 10.30 am)	11.00 am	The Grange School <i>Ian & Linda Wilson</i> Children: Junction
Sun 22	Aardv:ark	8.00 pm	The Ark <i>Joshua Part 2</i>
Mon 23	Forum	8.00 pm	Blackhorse Centre (see page 1)

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Sun 1	All-age special (coffee 10.30 am)	11.00 am	The Grange School <i>Jon Bird</i> Children: with adults
Sun 1	Aardv:ark	8.00 pm	The Ark <i>Celebration</i>
Mon 9	Joint prayer with St Matt's	7.30 pm	The Ark

BCF Youth Weekend 24-26 April 2009

The youth weekend is happening at Woodcroft Christian Centre near Chepstow, at the end of April. It will be a great opportunity for young people from across the church together for a weekend of fun, food, teaching, worship & adventure!

Open to those in Secondary School. Booking form (with details) will be available at the beginning of March. See Pete Osborne for more info.

Fairtrade Fortnight 23 February to 3 March has a banana theme this year: look out for banana events near you! Fairtrade fashion show Friday 27th at Bristol Cathedral. Models needed: contact bristolfairtradenetwork@googlemail.co.uk (see <http://www.bristolfairtradenetwork.org.uk/bristol/fairtrade.html> for more.) Tickets £5 (£3 conc) from Oxfam, Queens Rd, Bishopston Trading, Gloucester Rd, Bristol Ticket shop 0870 4444 40, www.bristolticketshop.co.uk or bristolfairtradenetwork@googlemail.co.uk.

BCF News is edited by Ian Wilson. Entries for the March Bulletin by 17 February, please, to bulletin@bcfnet.com

Read it online: www.bcfnet.com/resources/BCF_News