



**BRISTOL
CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP**

EQUIPPING CHRISTIANS
TO BUILD CHURCHES
TO CHANGE OUR WORLD

BCF NEWS

May 2011

Dave and Rhi Day

On behalf of the network team, and indeed speaking as I undoubtedly do for all within BCF, I would like to thank Dave and Rhi for their love, service and dedication to the church over the last forty or so years.

April 2011 marked a new beginning for Dave and Rhi as Dave left the employment of BCF, and together they embark on a new phase of ministry. Dave has spent the last three months setting up The Bridge Trust, which will enable them and others to continue to support churches and leadership teams alike in the UK and overseas. The Bridge Trust and BCF will continue to work together with the churches in India and Zambia, and look forward to other opportunities to partner together for the good of the kingdom.

We wish Dave and Rhi the very best, and pray that God would bless them abundantly as they step out on this new adventure.

Tim Groves on behalf of the network team.

For the journey

Tim Groves



I recently came across my notes for a cell leaders' meeting back in 2009. Amongst the many challenges facing us then, I want to pick out the following as of particular relevance for us today: Challenge one: *re-emphasise discipleship*. Challenge two: *re-imagine church (as an engaging faith community)*.

I set those present the task of scoring the cell experience according to the following criteria:

- Encountering Jesus
- Becoming disciples
- Creating community
- Being mission focused

The evening closed in discussion, and focused on the following areas/questions:

- *The journey within* – what would help my developing discipleship?
- *The journey without* – what would make mission a possibility for me?

We have since then sought to give sustained focus to personal discipleship. Why? Because in the church the personal is corporate – this is to say that God in the church looks like God in you, and God in the world looks like God in us in service to others.

Choosing between discipleship and mission is deeply unbiblical – we know that mission without rejuvenated faith is '*doing*' rather than '*being*' mission focused. One is plodding, dry, speaking of yesterday and full of duty. The other is dynamic, emergent, speaking of the future and full of hope. One looks back while the other looks forward '*to the hills*' (as the psalmist reminds us).

All this is to say that we are quite simply on a 'journey'. God's people are consistently described as a wandering, journeying people. Movement it would seem is implicit in the very nature of church, and, dare I say it, of God too. Yet too often our ambitions of church are set at zero. In this frame of mind the passage which reads '*God is the same yesterday, today and forever*', can act to push surprise from the room, being unconsciously reworked thus: '*God is as inactive and irrelevant in my life today as he was yesterday and will be for ever more.*'

Yet I for one, and thankfully I am not alone, believe like St. John that today

is a new day in a new week. God has spoken to us over the course of the last few years about being on a journey, of breaking camp and advancing.

As I reflect on the shape of Jesus' life, this occurs to me: I have read out of the bible stories, and therefore need to read back into them, the very shape of Jesus' life. This is to say Jesus' ministry was his wanderings. It is the wandering which John refers to as the word made flesh. Only Jesus the wanderer could become Jesus *'The Way'*. Only Mark's Jesus – a wild man of the wild place – could say *'Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.'*

Like Jesus we must discover the art of living, of wandering if you will. We are to wander precisely because the very creativity of God casts a note of 'depth' and offers an invitation to 'explore'. Yet few sacrifice the time and sink to the depths. 'Sinking' is a great aid to thought since the discovery of God requires first a death, in the same way that those who hope to *'rise up on eagle's wings'* must first sink to the depths.

We must rearticulate the need to sink; we must choose to speak of our life with all its ambitions and cravings as dead, in order to come alive to life in the possibilities and achievements of Christ.

Fancy this for a piece of toilet wall philosophy: *"Only those who 'go' remain alive"*. One of the ancient saints is recorded to have said: *'My life is an inward way, a constant wandering. I can't stop and rest. I must wander on.'* There's an inner necessity, like that felt by Jesus: *'But today and tomorrow and the day after I must go on wandering'* (Lk 13:33).

Let us therefore embrace the risk, the cost, the sacrifice, the joy, exhilaration, and the inevitable pain inherent in being a wandering community after Jesus Christ. This would of course be a fool's errand, suicide if you will, if it were not for the enabling presence of God, *'And remember, I am with you always, to the ends of the age'* (Mt 28:20).

Resound Weekend Away

Once again many of us from Resound are feeling the warm after-glow of the church weekend away near Christchurch. With plenty of sun, and the opportunity to enjoy it in the company of others, the stage was set for a great weekend. The Saturday was packed with activity, taking us from the coast to the forest and ending with a roaring campfire under the night sky. The weekend was an opportunity to loose our kids to the care of others and chat with those for whom the pace of life often militates against catching up and sharing a laugh. It was good to be joined by the Prices who led us in worship on the Saturday night and Sunday morning.

Aardvark and the Ark

Pete Osborne

Many of you will know that discussions have gone on for some time about the future of the Ark building. We have, for the past 3 years, been working with St Matts (the Anglican church whose building is close to the Ark), in developing a sense of direction



and a plan for the future of the Ark. This has been a slow process, but has been fruitful in developing the relationship and starting to engage with the local community. We have been close to forming a trust to take on the development of the Ark.

Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, we have decided not to proceed with the partnership. With changing priorities and resources, it was felt we were not all able to commit fully to the project. Although this is disappointing, especially for those who have put much work into the project, we are still left with a positive relationship, which we will hope to continue to develop in the months to come. I'd like to reiterate my thanks to those who have invested time and energy into this over the past few years.

This does of course leave us with the question of what to do with the Ark, and how it fits with our direction as a church. This is something that we, in Aardvark, will be taking time over the next couple of months to pray and think through. I believe the building is a great asset, but we cannot own and service a building that we only use once or twice a week. I would encourage you to join us in praying about this.

In Aardvark, it has been an encouraging few months with a renewed sense of direction and God speaking to us. The change in the building project means that we can no longer rely on a future development to stir up our sense of mission, but means we must ask those questions of ourselves again. This is both challenging and exciting! I'm hopeful that as we move forward we will see new opportunities emerge.

Caleb Year

A year to reflect, re-envision and re-energise your life

Do you have a desire to make the most of your life experience rather than discount it? Do you want the opportunity to reflect on the past, and prepare yourself for the future? If so, and you are 40 or over, then Caleb Year is the gap year for you. (No top age limit!)

Caleb starts in late September 2011 and runs until July 2012. There will be different modules for study and engagement, but it will be primarily practical. It will include personal development, thinking about the culture we live in, and exploring the 'sticky issues' of faith, as well as putting faith into practice. Teaching, discussion and worship will be mixed with opportunities to volunteer with a local charity and in your church, and there will be at least one overseas visit. Caleb will cost £1,250 (full time) or £800 (part time), plus overseas travel costs.

As part of Caleb, you will be involved in helping to shape the final programme, as we want the year to reflect your interests and to make use of your skills.

Caleb Year is co-ordinated by Dave Day, Neil Edbrooke and Linda Wilson and is run by The Bridge Trust in partnership with Springdale College and Christian Aid. (The Bridge Trust works with churches across the UK and internationally, and is led by Dave Day.) For more information or to arrange an informal chat about being part of Caleb Year, contact Linda at linda.wilson@blueyonder.co.uk or on 0117 330 6489.

Building project update

Resound Building

The planning application for the design changes made in order to reduce the costs, has been approved, and 2 weeks earlier than the target date, so that is great news!

Cowlin Construction have been appointed and the work is scheduled to begin on 3 May and finish on 16 December 2011.

So, work is about to begin – much planning has gone into this and it would be wonderful if it all went smoothly – please pray for the process. We will update the blog regularly with news and photos.

<http://buildingresound.blogspot.com/>

Severn Ridge

There is a revised plan in progress for submitting a new planning application. This will now include an additional house which will be a low cost property.

As you know, Severn Ridge needs to be sold as soon as possible in order to avoid drawing down a larger loan to complete the Resound building, so please continue to pray.

Easy Fundraising

Don't forget – another good way to raise money is to use easyfundraising.org.uk if you shop on line. They are connected to a huge list of retailers, like Amazon, Sainsbury's, John Lewis, Argos, Boots and loads more.

Cathy Knowles, project coordinator

Jane Elliott is having a

Bring & Buy Sale

Saturday 21 May 2pm - 5pm

39 Quantock close, North Common

Tea, Coffee and cake will be available

Plants, jam, crumbles, cakes, for sale (and much more)

All in aid of Resound.

Not the Royal Wedding

Ian Wilson

I don't know whether you were fascinated or bored by the royal wedding. (As I write, it's still a few days away.)

All the attention an event like this gets makes me wonder why some of us have such a fascination with celebrities generally and royalty in particular. Is it that we wish we could be glamorous, good looking, famous or rich? Might that make us feel better about ourselves if we feel insecure and insignificant?

I've been reading Paul's letter to the Philippians. He has things to say that speak to these kinds of attitudes. Would you like to be rich, famous and powerful? "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." (Phil 2:3) Do you envy the advantages that some people are born with? "If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more. ... But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." (Phil 3:4, 7-8) Something about the cult of celebrity and glamour is contrary to the gospel, which runs counter to worldly values, priorities and aspirations.

Anyway, I wasn't invited to the royal wedding, and I'm leaving the country on the day. (Not in protest, though. That just happens to be the day that Dave Day, Cara Medus and I are going to India.) But you and I are invited to another royal wedding. One of Jesus's parables in Matthew 22, explaining the kingdom of heaven, tells of a king whose original list of guests to his son's wedding refuse their invitations. "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests." We read of this marriage again in Revelation 19, where the angel tells John, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." You and I are invited not because of our status, wealth, connections or power. It's another manifestation of the grace of God – his goodness to those who don't deserve it.

Resound weekend away

Chris Johnson (CJ)

Didn't we have a magnificent time when we went off to Moorlands
We had so much fun
Enjoying the sun
We didn't even miss our broadband!

Down on Mudeford beach, some went in the sea
(That wind was much too chilly for me!)
Daisy's glasses were dropped
But then up they popped
Before Tim could say one, two three!

Then a stroll in the park which led to a lark
Involving Paul and Janet and daughter.
Poor Paul got quite wet
When upon him they set
Brandishing a bottle of water!

Back at base, in the evening, a card game we played
But Daniel's a tough one to beat.
The excitement was mounting
As we all did our counting
It was hard to stay still on your seat!

Some people played pool, or table football
While others just talked or did knitting
Until over the tannoy
Den's voice called with joy
"In the dining room you should all now be sitting!"

Some got up at dawn to see the sunrise
And cooked bacon, such was their passion.
The rest of us rose
Somewhat later than those
And ate breakfast in a civilised fashion!

At the end of Saturday we all made our way
To the bonfire which was really quite splendid.
Its glow in the dark
Warmed all of our hearts
With our weekend, alas, almost ended.

So thank you, Lord, for our weekend away;
You were with us in everything here.
In the friendships and caring
The laughter and sharing
And we're all looking forward to next year!

Crossways Pre-School table top sale

Saturday 7 May 10.00 am – 12.00 midday

Crossways Pre-School will be holding a Table Top Sale to raise money for the New Resound Building. The Table Top Sale will be for Baby and Children's Equipment/Toys/Games/Books/Puzzles ONLY.

If you would like to sale your items at this event, please speak to Karen Mott. The cost of a Table will be £5, but you keep all the money you make (which could be a great way for you to raise money for Resound too).

Please come along to the event. Entry will be free, and you could find some great new things for your children (or grandchildren).

The table top sale will be held at

Crossways Pre School
The Methodist Church
Windsor Place
Mangotsfield
Bristol
BS16 9DE

Maperio[™]

“Finding your purpose!”

May 2011

Please join us if you are:

- Seeking to live God’s purpose in your life
- At a point of transition in your life or career
- Thinking of making changes but undecided as to exactly which direction to take
- Addressing conflicts between your own values and those operating in your work environment

“Finding your purpose!” will give you the opportunity to step back from daily routine to :

- Gain clarity and purpose about your future direction
- Reflect deeply on the areas of your life that are important to you
- Explore your life and career from different perspectives

The programme is designed around 10 evening sessions and everyone has access to an exciting online tool (<http://www.maperio.org> Creative Metier’s Maperio[™]) and/or a hard copy workbook with Bible readings. We have been achieving profound results for participants as they connect with their calling.

“Its been a really great opportunity to reflect on my career and life goals in a communal context. I would recommend it to anyone unsure of the next step.” (SK)

Course Leader - Roger Allen.

For more details about the course or to find out about one-to-one coaching on these or any other issues, contact roger.angieallen@blueyonder.co.uk or 01454 416 446

7.30pm to 9.30pm every Tuesday from 17th May to 19th July 2011

Venue: Severn Ridge, Almondsbury, BS32 4HH.

Price £150 (subsidised) concessions negotiable

Mentoring in BCF

Mentoring is available on request. Mentoring provides an opportunity to explore, reflect and gain new perspectives.

Mentors are not counsellors but are trained to provide a confidential, encouraging relationship to help someone through a particular time of change. There is a choice of mentors whom you might meet with, although you can only be paired with a mentor of the same gender. For young people under 16, parental consent is needed. All mentors available to work with young people have been police checked.

On meeting a mentor, you will be asked what your goals are for future meetings, how many times you hope to meet, where and how often. Whilst this is a collaborative process, the responsibility for this always rests with the person being mentored.

If you need support but feel your difficulties go beyond the mentoring process, please talk to your group leader or one of the names below. We will endeavour to support you in finding an appropriate person or service that can help you move forward.

If you would like to enquire about mentoring please speak to:

- Resound – Christine Fulterer or Angie Davey
- Aardvark – Kayte Potter
- Thornbury – Mark Orrell



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BCF Diary May 2011

Sun 1	Resound Meeting	10.30 am	Barley Close School <i>Pete Osborne</i>
Sun 1	Aardvark	7.00 pm	The Ark
Sun 8	Resound Meeting	10.30 am	Barley Close School <i>Roger Allen / Tim Groves</i>
Sun 8	Zambia lunch	1.00 pm	Severn Ridge
Sun 8	Aardvark	7.00 pm	The Ark
Sun 15	BCF Joint meeting	3.00 pm	Thornbury Baptist Church Centre
Sun 22	Resound Worship meeting	10.30 am	Barley Close School <i>Emma Duncan</i>
Sun 22	Aardvark	7.00 pm	The Ark
Sun 29	Resound: messy church	10.30 am	Barley Close School
Sun 29	Aardvark	7.00 pm	The Ark

June 2011

Sun 5	Resound Worship meeting	10.30 am	Barley Close School Cara Medus/Ruth McConnell
Sun 5	Aardvark Family Meal	3.30 pm	The Ark

BCF JOINT MEETING
SUNDAY 15 MAY
THORNBURY BAPTIST CHURCH CENTRE
3.00 PM
BRING CAKES!

Entries for the June Bulletin by 24 May, please. bulletin@bcfnet.com

BCF News is edited by Ian Wilson.

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