

Fresh Expression Pilgrimage

From Friday September 4 through to Wednesday September 16, my husband Andy and I made a Fresh Expressions Pilgrimage to England. On our journey we talked to clergy and lay leaders about Fresh Expressions of Church as well as how many traditional Anglican churches are re-imagining themselves to bring the Gospel message afresh to those in their parishes and to those who have yet to hear the good news. Following is a brief summary of our travels. This is only a summary so if questions arise please contact us for a more detailed conversation.

Note: There are 11 different stories in this document.

By Sue Kalbfleisch.

Moot: creative and explorative Christian activity in the city

The Moot community, lead by Rev'd Ian Mobsby, is located in St. Mary Woolnoth Church, in the heart of London's financial district. The group meets from 6:30 onward on Sunday evenings beginning with refreshments and then worship begins at 7:00. This area of London is a "ghost town" on Saturdays and Sundays with restaurants and shops being closed, so everyone travels in to Moot.

On Sunday evening there were about 25 worshippers at Moot including folk from the area as well as some German youth leaders and a priest from New Zealand.

Worship included an adapted Compline service with a time of meditation. Ian joined the participants and Jon Oliver, a pioneer ministry student on a summer placement from Cambridge, led the service.

Moot is a safe place for people who have issues in their lives – it is non-judgmental, inclusive, welcoming, and engaging. Following closing prayer on Sunday, a young woman who had been in London for only a year expressed her thanks to the group for their care and support of her through a very difficult time in London.

About half the group went to the pub following the service to continue the conversation and to share community – and a beer of course!

For more information about Moot, please visit www.moot.uk.net



Andy sharing a joke with Moot community member Elizabeth as Ian looks on.

Meeting with Rev'd Dave Male at Ridley Hall, Cambridge.

Author of "Church Unplugged", Dave is a tutor in Pioneer Mission Training (Ridley Hall & Westcott House, Cambridge University) and the Fresh Expressions Advisor for the Diocese of Ely.

We met to discuss Dave's work with Pioneering Ministry and Fresh Expressions. For Dave it is important to establish an environment in which people with pioneering and innovative gifts can use their gifts – and then within a like-minded community Fresh Expressions can flourish. Participating in a Mission Shaped Intro course is a way to bring people together and Dave suggests it is best for a group of 2 or 3 from a church attend together.

Dave suggests meeting with entrepreneurial Christian businessmen as a way to brainstorm and create new ideas for ministry.



Sue and Dave Male

Night Church at the Exeter Cathedral

The Rev'd Canon Mark Rylands, the Canon Missioner for the Diocese of Exeter and Steve Jones, lay staff member with the Diocese of Exeter as well as the Methodist Circuit, founded Night Church, a Fresh Expression of church two years ago. Night Church meets in the Exeter Cathedral on Friday evenings and sees attendance of 100-200 on "low" days to 1000+ during their "Go Large" events. Attendees make choices of participating in a variety of groups such as prayer, meditation and discussion at each gathering. Music is various from ambient, to some instrumental, to a band, and so on.

Mark has been appointed Bishop of Shrewsbury and will use his entrepreneurial leadership to encourage the development of new Fresh Expressions in the Diocese of Lichfield. We met with Steve and Phil Pavey (doing a volunteer placement) to discuss Night Church and Fresh Expressions development in general.

For more information on Night Church, see www.nightchurch.org.uk



Mark Pavey (left) and Steve Jones (right) in the Diocese of Exeter Office garden.



The Cathedral Church of St. Peter in Exeter – exterior



The Cathedral Church of St. Peter in Exeter – interior where Night Church takes place

Messy Church with founder Lucy Moore

Andy and I were warmly welcomed by Lucy Moore and her husband, the Rev'd Dr. Paul Moore (Vicar of St. Wilfrid's Church, Bournemouth) for lunch, great coffee, and a time to chat about Messy Church and Fresh Expressions.

Since the first Messy Church at St. Wilfrid's, the number of Messy Churches has grown to over 400 in just 5 years – found in the UK, Canada and New Zealand. According to Lucy's first book, 'Messy Church: Fresh Ideas for building a Christ-centred community' (2006), "At its heart, Messy Church aims to create the opportunity for parents, caregivers and children to enjoy expressing

their creativity, sit down together to eat a meal, experience worship, and have fun within a church context.”

As a generalization, Lucy explained that of the people who attend most Messy Churches about a third are already church members of their church, a third attend other churches, and a third have no other church home.

We are looking forward to attending a national UK Messy Church conference on September 14th and 15th so will report on that later! For more information about Messy Church (and a brief video from St. Wilfrid’s), please visit www.messychurch.org.uk



Worship space at St. Wilfred’s Church



Sue with Paul and Lucy Moore

Messy Church Round Table – September 14 & 15

We arrived at Wycliffe Hall (Anglican Theological College at Oxford University) at noon for an intense 24-hour time of worship, prayer, workshops, conversation, sharing, review and discernment for the future of Messy Church (MC) with founder Lucy Moore and the Messy Church UK Regional coordinators. Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester, opened the sessions with a warm welcome and praise for MC’s important ministry to engage families in introducing and telling our Christian story. In the five years since Lucy Moore founded the first MC there are now over 350 MCs operating in the UK. Many engage up to 100 people once a month.

Going forward the group discussed the collection of data on the MCs in operation to get a better understanding as to the demographics, leadership development, how discipleship is being engaged and whether additional support materials are required.

The messiness of MC is not just the crafts and food but the messiness of engaging non-Christians missionally with discipleship the focus while working within the local cultural context.

In addition to Messy Church there are now Messy Markets, where a MC team may set up a stand at a local market or fair with Christian crafts to both engage people and invite them to attend a Messy Church monthly gathering.

An evening session introduced us to some extreme crafts - soap making and enameling.



Paul Moore, Bishop Colin, Colin Blake & Richard Fisher chat.



Thinking about the future of Messy Church.



Experiencing Extreme Crafts.

Fresh Expressions and the Sacraments

We attended this workshop sponsored by the Diocese of Ely presented by Rev'd Maggi Dawn and Rev'd David Male (see above). The workshop dealt primarily with the Eucharist and how to introduce it into a Fresh Expressions environment. Generally speaking this is done after the Fresh Expression has developed relationships and community amongst its members. Depending on the frequency of meetings this could take up to three years. The Eucharist, while maintaining the shape of traditional (inherited) worship, would be explored in new and different ways that maintain the traditional meaning and story but are contextualized for the culture around which the Fresh Expression is formed. After a period of teaching and conversation, the 40 workshop participants (50% lay – 50% clergy) broke into groups to create a service that included a three-part Confession, the Word, Intercessions, Eucharist and the Blessing/Sending. At the end all the elements came together for a very powerful Eucharist. We used many participatory elements; flip charts and markers, individually coming to the front to sign the confession, acting out the Gospel and visual images during our intercessions. As we shared the bread and wine with one another we spoke the words "Become part of the Story".



Rev'd Maggi Dawn



Sue Butler, Pioneer Missioner, and Sue chat during a break

Meeting with Bob Franklyn, International Coordinator for Fresh Expressions

We met in the Wesley Café in the Methodist Central Hall, London where Bob gave us an update on what is happening with Fresh Expressions both in the UK and internationally. The FE ecumenical partnership of the Church of England and the Methodist Church has expanded to include the United Reform Church (Presbyterians and others) and the Congregational Federation.

He advised that the FE website will have a new look which will include international postings on the site (e.g., Canadian “Church On Tap” video). The new site will be up September 21st so check it out at www.freshexpressions.org.uk . In addition, a new FE Sacramental DVD will be available this fall.



Sue and Bob in front of Methodist Central Hall, London

Meeting with Rachel Jordan at Church House on Great Smith Street, London

We met with Dr. Rachel Jordan, Associate National Mission & Evangelism Advisor (Church of England) who developed the Vision Day PowerPoint program materials and activities. An engaging and dynamic personality, Rachel will be in Toronto in February as keynote speaker for the Vital Church Planting conference.

Rachel is currently reviewing and updating the Vision Day program materials to make them more contextual and engaging. We had a lively discussion about some concerns from the Canadian Vision Day experiences and discussed how to improve the overall experience.

PS: In addition to Fresh Expressions, another of Rachel’s passions is “Jaffa cakes”!



Rachel and Andy in Church House

Ancient-Future - Changing Church for Changing Times

While attending a workshop on “Fresh Expressions and the Sacraments” at All Saints’ Milton, Diocese of Ely, we took some time at lunch to look in the sanctuary of this ancient church. To our surprise we didn’t find the traditional Anglican setting, but a modern hi tech environment;

movable chairs, projector and screen instead of service and hymn books, mixing board built into a central control pod at the back and a permanent drum kit, all of which identified some of the music styles that are used in their worship. There was even a flat screen monitor so the Presider could see what was being projected on the large screen without twisting into a pretzel. The worship space has been reconfigured to suit their new style of worship.

For more information visit www.allsaintsmilton.com



All Saints' Milton – Ancient



All Saints' Milton reconfigured worship space – Future

Fresh Expressions of Worship

Andy and I first visited Emmanuel Church in Loughborough in the mid 90's. Back then it had a traditional interior, dark pews, an organ and a piano. It was a Sunday when they as a community were discerning whether they should proceed with an ambitious scheme of building a new hall and office complex. Well it's now complete and during the time of building the addition they also undertook to renovate the church – replacing the pews with moveable chairs, installing A/V equipment and so on. Today it is a vibrant and growing church that offers a variety of opportunities for people to connect with God. They are currently raising money for a new organ.

Loughborough is a university and college town so students and young families are of great importance to Emmanuel's mission in the community. They have a 6:30 pm Evening Praise service every Sunday that is geared to students and young adults and the young at heart folks. The Rev'd Canon David Newman, Rector, preached in a teaching style that engaged all in attendance. Prayer was mostly meditative after David set the theme and was supported with soft violin, flute and keyboard music. The worship songs were sung enthusiastically by all (120-140) present. Often the attendance approaches 200 when students are back in term.

The 10:00 am morning service with an attendance of 240 (40 children) was in a liturgical/praise style and Eucharist was celebrated. It was the start up of the children's program so the adult child and family ministry volunteers were asked to come to the front to be installed – all 30 of them!

David has recently been appointed the Archdeacon of Loughborough so he will be departing Emmanuel sometime in October after which the parish will be looking for a new Rector that will continue David's ministry in the church and in the wider community. For more information about Emmanuel, visit www.easm.co.uk



Emmanuel Church & addition Loughborough



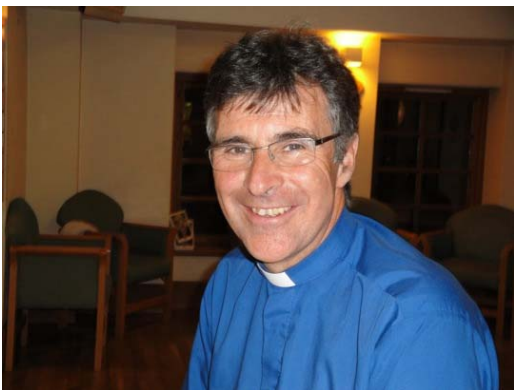
Welcoming sign



Fairtrade Market after Church



Inside Emmanuel



Rev'd Canon David Newman

All Saints Church Marlow

Nestled in the Thames River Valley, Marlow is an affluent community served by a variety of church denominations. All Saints is the largest church in the four church team ministry serving the greater Anglican community. Team ministries are becoming more common in the UK as Dioceses struggle with their finances and allocation of clergy. They also offer a significant advantage as clergy bring various specialties to the team that can be shared across the team churches instead of in one individual church.

All Saints Church Marlow is a church in transition that has three Sunday morning worship services; 8:00 am BCP service with 40 attendees (seniors), 9:30 am Contemporary service with 100 attendees (70% seniors & 30% families) and an 11:30 am Encounter service with 80 attendees (30% seniors & 70% families). Dani Muñoz, Team Vicar, told us that there are changes in the air to make All Saints more effective in its ministry – the pews will be removed and flexible seating installed, the pulpit will be relocated and the communion rails and altar will be relocated forward to be with the people instead of above the people. They already have an A/V suite to control the sound and video presentations for the Encounter service.

This re-imagining of church from a traditional ‘pews and organ/choral worship’ style to ‘flexible seating, organ, choral worship, praise band and audio-visual’ style seems to be the way forward in the UK as churches and parishes adapt their ministries to the realities of a changing world to reach out to the living Christ that resides in us all – churched, unchurched and dechurched.

All Saints has also partnered with the local Methodist Church and the Town Council to fund a renovation of their crypt into a café and youth centre for the community. Funding not only includes the renovations, but a three-year youth worker staffing commitment.

For more information check out www.allsaintsmarlow.org and www.morethansunday.co.uk



All Saints Church Marlow



All Saints Church Marlow – Interior



Nursery at rear of church



Rev'd Dani Muñoz Team Vicar



Door to the Crypt – Youth Centre