

We're making a difference!



weba news
making a difference 3 in 1 event June 2009

Nigel Coles explains why the WEBA Executive have made this our 'strapline' and our aim.

We'd spent the best part of a day as an executive discussing WEBA's proposed new purpose statement. You can imagine how many words had been spoken, discussions about finer points of meaning taken place and flip chart sheets written upon, when someone said as a throw away:

"Surely all most Christians want to do is 'make a difference.'"

Absolutely! As individuals we want to be those people who make a difference in the name of Jesus for the Kingdom of God. 'this why we have also adopted the BUGB strapline **'encouraging missionary disciples'** into our own purpose statement

As churches we want to be able to make a difference in and for the communities God has called us to serve. **'Growing healthy churches'** remains central to our purpose as a network of churches, because it

remains true that God has called the Church to be a signpost of his kingdom.

At our 3 in 1 Celebration, we focused upon the challenging words of Jesus, at the feeding of the 5000, -

**'you give them something to eat'.
HOW?**

The 'difference' we are called to make is:

1. **Absolutely dependent on God**

As an individual: Am I so reliant upon God in my life it would make no sense without him?

As a church: Are we so reliant upon God our purpose for existence would evaporate if he did not turn up next week?

2. **Potentially in the hands of every disciple**

As an individual: How willing am I to get involved with God's mission?

As a church: Are we getting round to having enough time for those beyond the church?

3. **Primarily intended for everyone**

As an individual: Do I have enough time for those beyond the church?

As a church: How much of our 'church activity' meets the needs of others?

4. **Possibly reliant on my willingness**

As an individual: Am I willing to place my empty hands in God's?

As a church: Do we need to exercise faith, or would our weekly pattern continue in any case?



This special edition of WEBA news is intended to help you make sense of the different frameworks within which the West of England Baptist Association aims to help its 120 churches **make a difference. Inside:**

- **Funding for mission**, whether through the Baptist Union of Great Britain's **Home Mission Fund**, or the **WEBA New Churches Fund**.
- **Frameworks for mission:** Have you heard of **PMC, Imagine, or Fit 4 Purpose?** Or are you sometimes confused?
- **'You give them something to eat'**. Senior Regional Minister Nigel Coles talks about **'making a difference'** as an individual and through the local church.

Growing in Christ, leading in his church

A special Saturday morning aimed at **local church leadership teams** (deacons, elders, ministers, and others)

Roy Searle of the Northumbria Community will be helping us to explore how in this busy world we can deepen our faith, disciple others and lead in ways that reflect Christ in a culture of activism and expectation.

This event will take place on **Saturday 17th October 2009** at **Thornbury Baptist Church**, and will include a light breakfast. Numbers will be limited, so please let the WEBA office know if you are interested, or look out for more details at www.webassoc.org.uk.



West of England Baptist Association

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Funding that makes a difference



Home Mission is the Baptist family purse, providing support for mission through the National Resource at Didcot, the Associations, and through grants to churches, organisations, and individuals. Churches are encouraged to give at least 5% of their income to Home Mission.

In 2008, when WEBA contributed **£246,774** to Home Mission, the WEBA region received back a total of £118,880 in grants to churches and £100,539 in funding for the Association. In addition to support for paid ministry and chaplains, five WEBA churches were awarded 'Mission through Projects' grants: Patchway, Horfield, Nailsea, St. Mark's, and Wotton.

Challenge: Could your church make sure that it has sent in **half** of this year's Home Mission giving by the end of **July**? This will make future planning for mission easier!



There are, however, mission projects within WEBA which don't come under the Home Mission umbrella. Alison Boulton and her family have moved into a new housing development in Wichelstowe, just outside Swindon, with the aim of building God's kingdom in that community. WEBA is helping them to buy a house large enough to facilitate this work through the **New Churches Fund**. In 2009 this fund will focus on the Wichelstowe project, after that we have a dream of planting one new community every year for the next ten years.



WEBA has asked churches to give **£200** (£75 for smaller congregations) to help kick start this fund. So far, at least 14 churches have given over £4,000, which is a fantastic start.

For these projects to go ahead, however, we need longer term funding in place. Many of our churches already give generously to Home Mission on a regular basis, so we would like to give individuals the opportunity to help with this fund. Do you have a heart for bringing the good news about Jesus to places where he is virtually unknown? **Could you spare as little as £6 per month to enable the foundation of new worshipping communities in our region?** If so, please fill in the standing order form enclosed and help us plan for the future. Please remember to sign the gift aid declaration if you are a UK taxpayer. Cheques can also be sent to the WEBA office, written to WEBA, and marked 'New Churches Fund' on the back.

Thank you to all those churches who pay travel and other expenses when Regional Ministers visit them for services or are invited to meetings. This is another way in which churches can support the wider Baptist Family.

Frameworks that make a difference

WEBA aims to provide churches with the opportunity to engage with one or more 'frameworks' designed to help them grow and develop as missional communities. At the present time, we are making use of three such frameworks. If you think your church might benefit from getting involved in one of these processes, please contact the WEBA office and we'll put you in touch with one of the Regional Ministers, who will be able to guide you through the different options.



'Imagine' brings together church leadership teams for 1 evening 3 times a year for 2 years. Identical events take place across the association, so everyone can get to an Imagine meeting. The intention is that by listening and sharing, and then putting ideas into action, the leadership teams (usually ministers and deacons) discover new ways forward and bring mission closer to the heart of the church. The Imagine process will be starting again in 2010—if you would like to be involved please register your interest with the WEBA Office now.



'Fit 4 Purpose?' is WEBA's bespoke version of the 'Mission Consultancy' which is offered in various forms through many of our associations. 'Fit 4 Purpose?' is designed to help you facilitate a review of where God has placed your church, and identify opportunities to maximize its impact for God's kingdom upon its surrounding community. The whole church is involved in the 'Fit 4 Purpose?' process, together with a trained facilitator from outside the church. There are five steps, most of which take place over a three month period. Please ask the WEBA office for an introductory leaflet, or download one at www.webassoc.org.uk



Partnership for Missional Church is an Anglican/Baptist partnership initiative designed to help change the culture within a church and enable them to move further down the road to becoming a genuinely missional church. It is a three year process, and involves the whole church, but different 'teams' are involved at different times, meeting with other churches in the PMC 'cluster' three times a year. Several of our churches will be beginning this process at Clevedon Baptist Church on Friday 25th and Saturday 26th September 2009. You can find out more at <http://togetherinmission.co.uk>

To keep up with what WEBA can offer your church, go to www.webassoc.org.uk and sign up for our (short!) fortnightly email update