

## EfM Convention October 2007 at St Phillip's Cathedral in Birmingham.

The day was led by Canon Peter Howell-Jones and started with a cup of tea or coffee, with a biscuit or two. Canon Howell-Jones is in charge of Mission in Birmingham and began with an interesting talk. He then sent us out in small groups to look and reflect on some aspect of Birmingham City Centre life. You know how easy it is, with the rush of modern day life to walk past a statue, building etc without really looking at it. Our group giggled at 'the Floozy in the Jacuzzi', the endearing title given locally to the naked stone lady reclining in the fountain.

After we'd all briefly described what we'd seen, Peter gave us each an envelope with a picture in it and asked us to quickly look at the picture and then put it back in the envelope. He then put the picture up on the overhead projector and asked who of us had seen the young lady and who had seen the old hag. (Both were the same picture). This was a good exercise to show how people see, view and interpret what they see (or are told to see) – the brain being a wonderful thing!

Peter's main message for the Convention was that our perceptions of the Church had to change – instead of "going to church" we had to "go out from the church" into our workplaces, pubs and communities where we could meet the majority of people who knew nothing about the Christian faith. Interaction, getting alongside, helping, loving were the watchwords for this.

We then joined together in a Eucharist with Gary O'Neill and Peter as celebrants and the EfM certificates were presented.

The meeting concluded with wine and a lovely buffet meal

Tracey Blunn, assisted by Kevin Evans

### 'Graduate Group' lives on

An EfM group of seven students plus mentor met in south Oxfordshire from 1999 to 2002 . . . . . and it is still meeting regularly. Alright - no longer every week! - but usually three times a year during the last five years. When we meet we pray and catch up. We almost always say 'next time let's do a TR' and we do occasionally - but not often enough for any of us. (We must remember the saying 'where there's a will there's a way'!)

During those five years much has happened and lives have changed in unexpected ways. Four people's husbands have died; six have moved house – at least once; one lives in Oman, another had two years in the West Indies and a third now lives partly in Australia. There are new grandparents, parents of new graduates (the university sort) and new in-laws. Together, we continue to give thanks, reflect on our ministries and support each other through prayer.

We make a date, let everyone know – and to the surprise of us all last September the whole group was there together – no one missing. What a joyous occasion!



The Netherlands Group now has completed their first year of study under the mentorship of Francis Noordanus. The group in Eindhoven have started their second year with the new members joining them. Francis reports that there is much to be encouraged about, as students develop in applying their new skills and insights.

### Calendar

If you want to enrol for mentor training or make an advanced booking for the Convention please email the Administrator: haydonwilcox@mac.com

### Basic Mentor Training

9th – 11th May 2008

Morley Retreat & Conference House, Derbyshire

26th – 28th September 2008

St. Columba's House, Woking

### Convention and Award Ceremony

4th October 2008

from 10.30 a.m. – 3 p.m. in Birmingham Cathedral  
There is no charge for students and active mentors. Additional guests are welcome at a cost of £5

### EfM UK Management Group meets:

19th April 2008 and 12th July 2008

If you have any issues that you wished discussed E-mail Joanna Hobart on: hobartjc@btinternet.com

### Fees

The student fees for those enrolling for an EfM Group are now:

EfM students full year	£195
EfM students registered with Chester	£ 270

The fee for mentor training inclusive of residential accommodation costs has been increased to contribute to the trainer's expenses and eventually to a fee for the trainer.

Accreditation Training	£200
On-going training for active mentors	£165

Mentors are paid £55 for each student enrolled and studying in their group.

# PREPARING TO CELEBRATE

# EfM

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY

## "Changing Lives"

Issue 9 - March 2008

The newsletter for EfM UK

Completing four years of theological study is a great achievement in itself. For EfM students the award ceremony at our annual convention is a time to celebrate with the whole EfM community the privilege of growth and service in Christian discipleship.

In 1993 the first award ceremony took place at Westhill College, Birmingham. These were the pioneers of EfM, following its introduction to the UK by The Revd. Chris Lee in 1988. The students of this first group went on to develop their calling in lay ministry, including, as a few examples, Doreen Cooksley and Peter Bush became Lay Readers, Jennifer Oldershaw (Sabeel Palestinian charity), Valerie Bishop and Paul Wilkins (child and adult Christian education), Pauline Thomas (music ministry), Gerald Bishop (healing ministry, prison ministry, youth drama). All have been involved in various forms of lay worship and church outreach projects continuously in the years since 1993. The leadership of Chris Lee and the EfM programme were the foundation for their lay ministerial development.



Last year's Convention saw more students completing their four years of study. They came from the groups in Norwich, Heanor, Buxton and Birmingham. Like those who have gone before them they are getting engaged in new expressions of ministry because they have become empowered through EfM.

Twenty years later we celebrate the continuing contribution of EfM to the ministry and mission of the Christian community and we look forward with hope. Regardless of the lack of encouragement from the institutions in the Church, we believe that EfM is a gift of grace that has proved its long-term appeal and value to adult learning and discipleship formation.

With enthusiasm and a worthy track record we are planning for growth around the UK and Western Europe. Our partnership with The University of Chester has affirmed our academic rigour and the excellent model of learning that we practise. It has taken twenty years for a generation of students to infiltrate at grass roots their part of the Christian community. So many people can testify to EfM as the course that helped them to mature in their faith and have the confidence to do new things in God's service. Now we are preparing to ask the 'shapers' and 'shakers' of various institutions to listen to the EfM story and to see whether there are any future partnerships that can be established.

During the next few months a major process of consultation will take place among the students of our dispersed learning community. This will shape the planning of our 2008 Convention in Birmingham Cathedral on Saturday 4th October. To that Convention we shall be inviting 'key listeners' to hear our story and to appreciate the significance of what our programme offers.

Please book this date in your diary and contact me if you'd like an invitation.

Haydon Wilcox

EfM UK Administrator

Please contact one of us if you would like more information about EfM

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visit our new website - [www.efmuk.org.uk](http://www.efmuk.org.uk)