

A Workshop 'The Art of Theological Reflection'

12th - 14th June 2009 - St. Columba's House, Woking

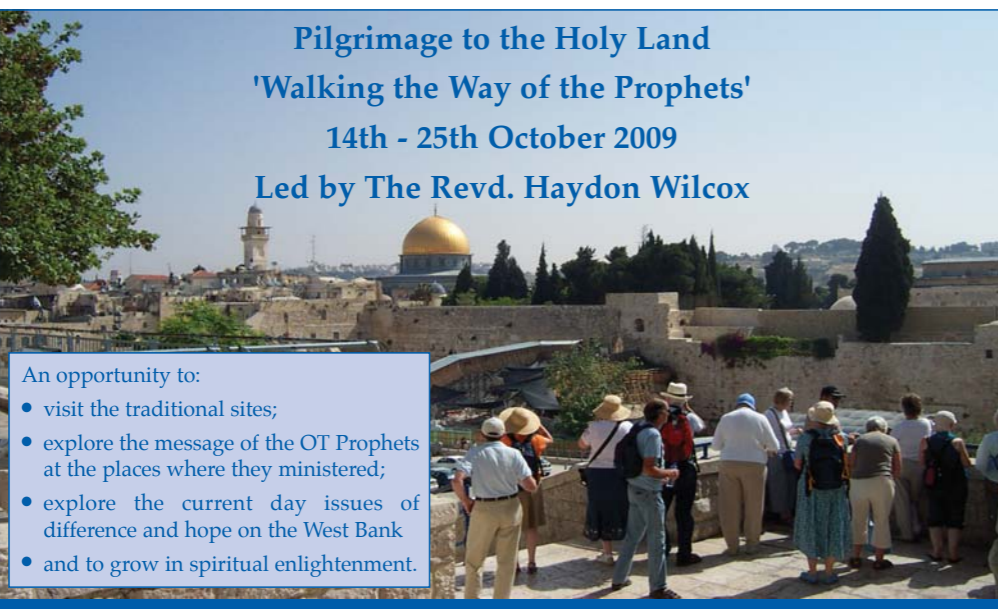
An introduction to the practice of Theological Reflection in Christian ministry and spiritual development run by The Revd. Haydon Wilcox

This is part of the Programme run by St. Columba's House, Woking

Cost: residential rate £154, non-residential rate £94

To book Tel. 01483 766498 or email: retreats@stcolumbashouse.org.uk

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land
'Walking the Way of the Prophets'
 14th - 25th October 2009
 Led by The Revd. Haydon Wilcox



- An opportunity to:
- visit the traditional sites;
 - explore the message of the OT Prophets at the places where they ministered;
 - explore the current day issues of difference and hope on the West Bank
 - and to grow in spiritual enlightenment.

Tel. 01252 621639 or email: haydonwilcox@mac.com for a brochure

The Chester Partnership

It is with great regret that the partnership with the University of Chester has ended. EfM UK greatly valued this partnership, as it enabled students to obtain academic accreditation for their studies that could be used towards a degree.

Sadly financial constraints meant that it was impossible to offer this provision because too few students were registering for accreditation.

EfM UK thanks the University of Chester for the years of partnership that we shared and gives thanks for the students that benefited from it.

Mentor Training

Mentor Training is an opportunity for people to become accredited as mentors in order to begin new groups; to learn more about the EfM programme or simply for current or past students to attend in order to practise their skills of theological reflection.

We encourage Clergy and Readers to attend mentor training, as part of their professional development.

It is possible for an Anglican diocese or partner church body to have a non-residential mentor training event run in their area. The EfM trainers are also willing to provide theological reflective day workshops as part of clergy and lay in-service training

The programme of mentor training is listed in the calendar below and additional training requirements can be requested by emailing the Administrator: administrator@efmuk.org.uk

Fees

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

EfM students full year £195

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

Accreditation Training £200

On-going training for active mentors £165

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

Calendar

If you want to enrol for mentor training or make an advanced booking for the Convention please email the Administrator: administrator@efmuk.org.uk

Basic Mentor Training

29th – 31st May 2009
 St. Columba's House, Woking

Development Mentor Training

20th – 22nd November 2009
 St. Columba's House, Woking

2009 Convention and Award Ceremony

3rd 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 in 2009 on:

28th March, 13th June and 14th November

If you have any issues that you wished to be discussed by the Management Group then e-mail Joanna Hobart on: joanna@efmuk.org.uk

EfM

exploring faith matters

The newsletter for EfM UK

Small yet impressive, is a good way of describing EfM's quiet work in the lives of our scattered groups in the UK and Europe.

That work was celebrated during the Convention, held at Birmingham Cathedral last October to mark the 20th Anniversary of EfM in the UK and Europe. The Convention provided the opportunity for stories to be shared. Though the story of EfM's entrance into the UK is a fascinating one, it is the stories of past and current students that continue to encourage and confirm that EfM really is a significant partner in the church to develop faith, discipleship and lay ministry.

EfM has remained small in the UK, probably because it is attractive to only a minority of people. Few have the time to commit to such an extensive programme of study and many still are unaware of our resources to the church. Yet there is a growing need among some Christians who have been nurtured to conform, to ask the challenging questions that can sometimes bewilder themselves, let alone others!



The Convention in Birmingham Cathedral



The story of EfM shared by Joanna Hobart

Fowler's theory of faith development describes this as the struggle of the third stage, when the initial comfort of belonging to a faith that synthesizes with our values, breaks down because the neatness of our taught faith and the experience of biblical and church authority fails to answer the questions that we have always been asking, but often been unable to express.

EfM provides the forum for mature Christians to ask the questions in a safe but challenging environment. As students critically reflect upon biblical texts or the evolution of Christian thought, a transition occurs and they begin to examine themselves, seeking ways to express their values through faithful action. Amazingly we see

students gaining clarity about their personal values whilst building fellowship with others whose value systems might differ from their own.

That's what makes EfM so impressive as it is prepared to embrace the people who may be struggling with simplistic teaching and need to question the conventions and norms of their Christian community. It is no coincidence that the majority of students remain faithful members of their congregations and go on to be enthusiastically engaged with a ministry that might never have previously considered.

The church faces the danger of losing mature people and the rich gifts they bring because the emphasis is upon bringing people to faith and nurturing them as disciples to conform to Christian teaching. EfM can help local churches who may not have the resources or confidence in supporting such people and encouraging them to pass onto the fourth and fifth stage of Fowler's theory of faith development where the fruit of wise and reflective leadership is realized.



Elaine Graham guest speaker at the Convention

Haydon Wilcox
 Mentor of the Fleet Groups

Please contact our administrator if you would like more information about EfM

Haydon Wilcox
 EfM UK Administrator
 Telephone: 01252 621639
 E-mail: haydonwilcox@mac.com

visit our new website - www.efmuk.org.uk

small yet impressive



Thoughts

by Chrissie Lee

In the paradox that measures time passing as slow yet swift, it seems eons but was only a year ago that Haydon Wilcox wrote to ask me to contribute some memories and a photo or two of my late husband, Chris Lee, to the EfM UK newsletter. Chris was the founding director of the programme for the UK and I met him at an EfM UK Training of Trainers in 1994. When the newsletter was published, Haydon kindly sent me a copy and it was then that I read about the 20th Anniversary convention scheduled for this past October. I invited myself to attend to keep the connections of colleagues now friends and to honor my husband for whom - like many of us - EfM was a life- and soul-altering passion.

My plan was to sit unobtrusively in the back. However Haydon asked me to participate as part of a small group and then he graciously asked me to be part of a panel discussion. From that vantage point, I was amazed and pleased to see the vibrancy of EfM in the UK and Europe. Joanna Hobart's moving EfM UK/Europe history recitation was a perfect backdrop to the electric energy I felt in the midst of those in attendance. The images the groups presented, the depth of experience and enlightenment expressed, the emotional connections to the material and theological reflection processes and to each of the communities that EfM groups become, were faith-satisfying and spiritually fulfilling. Yet, in themselves, the stories were not surprising to me. I've been privileged to experience similar moments in the US and in Australia at various program anniversary celebrations. But it was exhilarating, as always, to be part of an organic process that lives and breathes through all those who connect with it in real time in real life in real terms. I certainly felt connected to each one in the room as well as those who have gone before and to those who are yet to become involved.

Part of any anniversary celebration is recollection and also in this case, in equal part, to capitalize on the exhilaration and encourage those of us closely connected to share our experiences outside of the circle. In the EfM context that means the programme can grow and our community of Christ inevitably widens. When "doing theology" becomes a much more common way of life in the Church for the average lay person, how much more will the experience of Christ infuse our lives individually and collectively? Whether in the UK, US, Europe, Canada, Australia or New Zealand, and the many other places EfM

is or can be, in face-to-face groups or in groups meeting online, we know that where two or three are gathered, Christ is present. When we know that Christ is alive, when we are overtly conscious of His presence in our own everyday lives, the Church is Triumphant. So, how do we take our enthusiasm for all that EfM has given us into the wider world?

An old TV commercial (advert!) in the US used the idea of word of mouth as a powerful way to "spread the word" of the brilliance of their particular product. By telling two people who tell two people who tell two people and so on, the recognition of the product - in this case the EfM programme - grows exponentially and enthusiastically. Birmingham Cathedral on that day gave the evidence of word of mouth results borne through the dedicated work of trainers and mentors and students. Growth happens! Even in unlikely places through unlikely - or sometimes uncomfortable? - evangelists.

"Yes We Can" is the hallmark slogan of the winner of the recent US election campaign. Who, a year ago, could have envisioned an African-American winning election as



President of the United States? When Charles Winters first developed EfM, he thought it would be successful if several hundred people became involved. NOW look at the US election and EfM worldwide. Wonders truly never cease! EfM grows through us and in us and with us. The programme re-invents itself for various places and with various delivery options to keep up with the world in

its many settings and the life-styles that we have.

Even in, or perhaps especially in, the trials of harsh economic realities, what is truly important is being aware of how EfM has enhanced your understanding of Scripture, the history of the Church, the essence of Salvation, the reality of Christ and community in your life. The challenge now is to determine how you pass the gift along. Which two people will you tell, first?

Chrissie Lee was married to the former director of EfM UK, the late Revd. Chris Lee. She has been committed to EfM in the US, being a mentor and trainer in the programme. It was our privilege at the UK Convention for her to be present among us and to present the 16 students who had completed their four years of study with their awards.



Our youngest student in the UK

Philip Goodes is our youngest student in EfM UK. He started his studies at the beginning of 2007 in the Aldershot group after Peter Southon, the mentor, encouraged him to give it a try and he's never looked back! Now he's starting his third year and obviously loves his studies.

For many 18 year olds the thought of joining a group of older people would seem rather daunting but in fact his quest is no different from theirs, as he says that all he wanted at the time was to gain more knowledge of the bible and to grow in his faith.

He joined the church choir at St. Michael's, Aldershot, at the age of 11, because he enjoyed singing. He became a Christian in 2004, whilst visiting Taizé for the first time. He found it a place of quietness and reflection. He was overwhelmed by it all and enjoyed the company of some Americans who supported him during his stay. On the Wednesday midday prayers he broke down in tears and he sought good advice from one of the brothers. Later he received a blessing from Brother Roger and was invited to have lunch with him and the other brothers. This was a very privileged moment in the life of a 15 year old. On the last evening at Taizé he went to receive a blessing, again from Brother Roger, and experienced an aura of pure love that Philip believes was the presence of the Spirit of God. For a moment it rooted him to the spot and he was convicted of the power and love of God.

Philip's returned every year to Taizé, which he now considers his spiritual home. Having completed his A levels in philosophy, accounting, classical civilisation, beginners Greek and an AS in RE - EfM seemed a natural progression. Currently Philip works in Sainsbury's where he hopes to progress to management level. He describes how difficult it is openly being a Christian at work - some are very interested and others quite dismissive. He believes that his ministry is to be pleasant, caring and positive - to demonstrate the Christian attitude in the way he supports colleagues and customers.

EfM has given him the knowledge he needed. It has provided him with a community away from Taizé where there is a genuine closeness to each other. His EfM group is a place of laughter, friendship and a safe place to express different opinions. Philip greatly values the Spiritual Autobiographies and loves Theological Reflections (TR). Recently his group did a TR using a toilet roll as an artefact! Philip says that it was amazing what insights came from that TR.

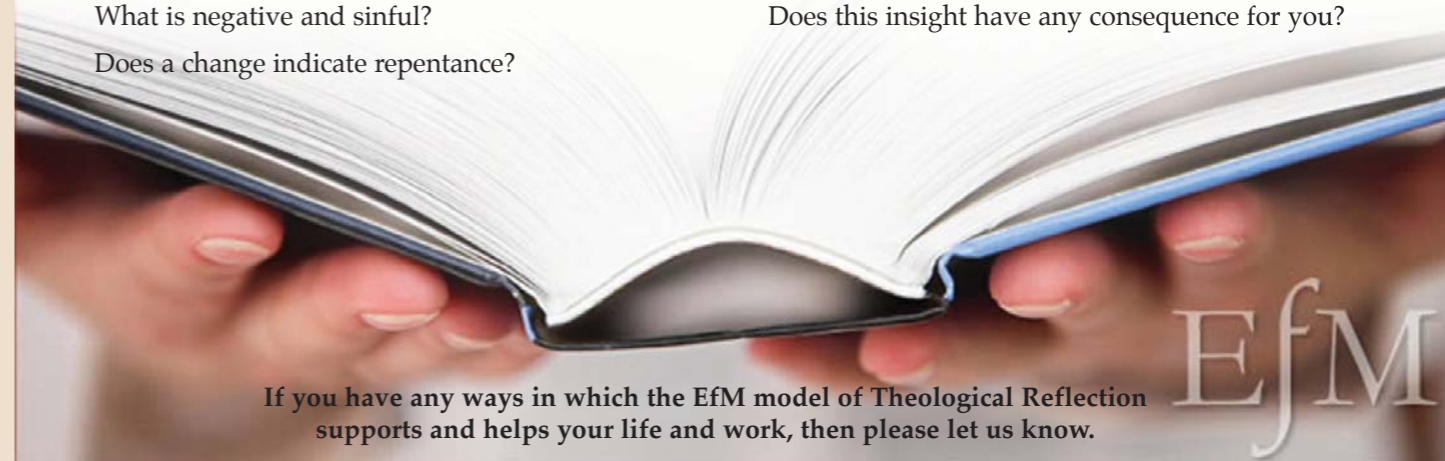
EfM may not be the natural choice for young Christians but its certainly helped Philip. Next Philip wants to do basic mentor training. We watch with interest to see how his ministry develops.

Eric Pointer, a former student of the Norwich Group

Since graduating I have developed an application of the Theological Reflection methodology to the bible study part of my quiet times. I hope other students may find it helpful.

Bible study by theological reflection

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| Make yourself comfortable and quieten your mind and body | Does a challenge or shock indicate judgement? |
| Read the selected bible passage slowly | Does a celebration indicate redemption? |
| What is the background of the passage? | Can you identify any personal relevant experience? |
| Is it for example proclamation, rules, story, letter or vision? | Does the passage support, inform or challenge your experience? |
| What is happening in the passage? | Does our culture support, inform or challenge the passage? |
| What is positive and creative in the passage? | What meaning has the passage for you now? |
| What is negative and sinful? | Does this insight have any consequence for you? |
| Does a change indicate repentance? | |



If you have any ways in which the EfM model of Theological Reflection supports and helps your life and work, then please let us know.

EfM