

## "Changing Lives"

The newsletter for EFM UK

**Leadership comes in many guises but certain styles seem more desirable in particular situations.**

**God continues to call men and women with specific gifts to become the leaders of the Church.**

In the summary of the 'Criteria for discernment of vocation prior to training for ordained and accredited lay ministry in the Church of England', this requirement of leadership is given:

'Candidates should demonstrate the ability to offer leadership in the Church community, and to some extent in the wider community, and to guide and shape the life of the Church community in its mission to the world. This includes a willingness and capacity to draw on and develop the abilities of others. Candidates should be witnesses to the servant hood of Christ and show evidence of providing an example of faith, love and discipleship which is inspiring to others.'



Actually I want those characteristics to be developed in all Christians and not just in those aspiring to authorised public ministry. An aspiration of EFM is to be one of many vehicles to bring people to a maturity of faith, so that they can minister confidently and purposefully in the world.

EFM is more than a course of extension study. The seminar group is a core feature of the Programme, providing an opportunity to grow by testing and challenging ideas, by debating with others and respecting those with a different theological position, by developing skills to communicate issues of faith, and by gleaning wisdom and insights from other people's experience.

The constant attention to the process of theological reflection is another key element of the EFM Programme. Reflective practice becomes a skill that can be applied to the many roles we hold in life. Those who engage with this practice find it both a craft and a discipline as it develops conversation between the many voices that enrich our encounter with God and the world.

For those with responsibility for discerning vocation for public ministry EFM is a useful resource. Some who believe that God might be calling them to some greater commitment of service in the Church have done little in depth study of their faith. They might have been nurtured in one particular tradition and have little awareness of other interpretations and practices. In the lengthy process of discernment, some may need the support of others who are sharing a similar path.

Ideally EFM groups should be strategically established so that people can be encouraged to start the process of discernment about their future ministry. We already have some models of good practice and we should seek to develop more.

EFM is committed to the shaping of reflective, faithful, knowledgeable and mature people. As that process proceeds, ministry is developed. As that sense of vocation to serve is awakened in the consciousness of the baptised, so will be their gifts of leadership. I commend EFM as a programme for those who want to enhance their work of shaping leadership for the future. EFM does not seek to compete for this market but wants to work in partnership with current providers.

Haydon Wilcox  
*Vocation Advisor and Bishop's Assessor  
in the Anglican Diocese of Guildford*



Haydon Wilcox

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

Canon Gary O'Neill, Director of EFM UK  
119 Selly Park Road, Selly Oak  
Birmingham B29 7HY  
Telephone: 0121 472 0146 Fax: 07773 371 598  
E-mail: gary@efmuk.org.uk

Haydon Wilcox  
EFM UK Administrator  
Telephone: 01252 621639  
E-mail: administrator@efmuk.org.uk

[www.efmuk.org.uk](http://www.efmuk.org.uk)

## Paul Robinson

*former member of the Oldham EFM Group*

I was introduced to EFM by the Diocesan Director of Ordinands. He suggested during my period of discernment that the course and fellowship would be beneficial both prior to attending the Bishops Advisory Panel and subsequently as an introduction to formal ministry education and formation.

I decided, at least in the short term, that I would only be available to study the first two years of the EFM course, studying The Old Testament in year one and The New Testament in year two. I felt that these two years were probably the most important to me. I also decided to enrol into the University College of Chester Church College's Certificate in Biblical Studies.

And now, having just finished the second year and received my marks back from Chester College, I can wholeheartedly say that it has been a very worthwhile experience. Not only have I gained the very close affection, friendship and fellowship in the EFM group, but I have been blessed spiritually on my journey with my companions of two years. As I face my future challenges I feel confident that on starting my ministerial training in September I have a firm foundation of biblical knowledge on which to build my future ministry.



*Paul Robinson*

Paul Robinson  
former member of the Oldham EFM Group

## **EFM really does change your life**

*Ann Farnsworth 2006 Graduate*

"...and don't do anything without God being involved – lighten up and never burn the net curtains with your prayer candle..." said the Rev. Geoff Pickup. As if in response, someone said to me, "You could stand up there and do that!" The rhetorical pantomime robustly began, "No, I can't!" "Yes you could! You are quite capable," I was told.

"No, I can't!" Having received the Bishop's Certificate at Derby Church House, my mentor Rev David Edwards innocently asked me, "What's next?" "Next?", I really hadn't thought of a 'next'.

"How about EFM? Where are you spiritually today? It offered 'profoundly-thought-provoking' theology. It's a unique package with Theological Reflection. You'll see, you'll enjoy it for four years."

"Why, haven't I heard of it before? Four years....what's this about – four years?" "Ann, listen" said the Rev, "I've arranged an appointment for you, with Mrs Dawn Lonsdale, talk to her."

"Read the chapter and your seminar for the forth-coming week, that is all that is required! I'm sure you will enjoy it", she said. From October 2002 to July 2006 I was part of the Heanor EFM Group with Mrs Dawn Lonsdale as our mentor and Mrs Kate Birkin as our Assistant Mentor. The Theological Reflection took a while to 'get into' but I 'got into it', in the end. I did 'all' the assignments, sometimes reading far more chapters than required. Oh yes there is always one in every group. I was re-awakened. The camaraderie of the inter-action within the group was hilariously illuminating. There's nothing like the serious questioning that can only be got from such a course as this. I have found that the four years developed seeds that had been dormant for years; my reserved shyness and lack of confidence was blown away. Old rubbishy ideas have been carefully jettisoned leaving a thoughtfully re-valued and challenged Ann.

Humorously Rev Haydon Wilcox asked me over the telephone, "Have you approached the Derby Diocesan Director of Ordinands yet?" I said to him, "I am in bold-prayerful-pondering-mode but I will consider it." Already I am being challenged to consider the next step in my ministry. So the future for EFM is spreading many seeds encouragement. If you are seeking challenge and understanding this course could be for you.

It is clearly what it states: 'Education for Ministry really does change your life!'



*Ann receiving her graduation certificates from Dr. Paula Gooder*

## Convention 23rd September 2006

### Comments from Joan Bradnam, Fleet Group

This was my first time at the annual Convention. I found it a good insight into the EFM fellowship that extends between the groups and I very much regret not taking the opportunity to go last year.

Birmingham Cathedral is a welcoming venue - both the building and the people. There was time to chat with people from other groups over arrival coffee and the buffet lunch and it was very interesting to meet so many like-minded people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

During the morning Dr Paula Gooder led us through a fascinating workshop exploring "Who was the real Mary Magdalene?" which drew on everyone's views and comments. Then in the closing Eucharist and Graduation we were focused together on the purpose of EFM for the coming year and beyond.

It was a good sized gathering of students, mentors and guests but even so there was room for more and I would suggest it is worth making a plan to be there in 2007.

*Take some guests too.*



## Breaking new ground in the Netherlands

We are pleased to announce that the Netherlands has its first EFM Group. Their mentor, Revd. Francis Noordanus, was introduced to EFM while serving a curacy in New Zealand in the early 90s. He studied the first year and became convinced of its usefulness as a resource in his ministry and for the life of the church. His main interest in EFM was that it allowed for adult learning and informed reflection in isolated settings. This brought it into his consideration during his ministry among resident English speakers in his current posting. Following his recent mentor training he was inspired to gather together a group of people from his Anglican Church in the Diocese of Europe, who wanted to develop in their understanding of the faith.

This new group is starting in Eindhoven. It consists of eight students and is a real international mix, consisting of:

- 1 Polish American
- 1 Indonesian
- 3 Chinese
- 2 Dutch
- 1 American

**We wish them well!**

### Are you interested in starting an EFM Group in your area?

Contact the Administrator for some information at [administrator@efmuk.org.uk](mailto:administrator@efmuk.org.uk)

Search our web page

Enrol on a basic training event – we have spaces for 15th – 17th June 2007

Request a trainer to lead an introductory event in your area (min 20 people)

Request local training of mentors in your area (min 6 people)

Explore with us the possibility of a partnership in lay education

We are a resource for the churches in the UK and Europe – a 'non-profit making registered charity' seeking to serve and provide quality lay formation.

## Fees & PR - recent Management Group decisions

The Management Group meets four times a year in Birmingham Cathedral offices. In October we considered the budget for 2007. This meant looking at areas directly affecting mentors and students, all of which had financial implications. In addition, we have been aware that both our leaflet and, more importantly, our website need revamping.

**Fees** Increased costs are currently hitting us in the area of mentor training - the fees we charge are simply not covering costs. Mentors with groups pay for their on-going training, so any increase means they need an increase in their fee for each student in their group. In addition we have long wanted to work towards paying trainers for the time they give to EFM. So this means that there are increases in all areas from January 2007. (See below for details)

**Publicity** Four years ago the Management Group decided to invest capital by paying the expenses of a Field Director and circulating widely an improved Newsletter. These actions had effect - we now have a larger number of groups and students and we still have the same amount of money in the bank! So we have made the decision to invest once more, this time in the website and leaflet and are employing professional help to design these. We hope that they will be off the ground in the very near future.

### Training fees:

Active mentors: £145 for all on-going training  
Previously accredited mentors who currently have no group (i.e. 'non-active' mentors)  
and those not previously accredited: £180

These charges will be increased by £20 in January 2008 to contribute to the trainer's expenses and eventually pay a fee to the trainer

### Student fees:

Student fees £195  
Chester fees £75

### Mentor fees:

£55pa for each student registered  
Start-up grant: £25 annually  
paid after registration

### Chester tutor fees:

£30pa for each student

## Training

EFM UK is committed to the provision of quality training. Active mentors undertake residential training every 12 – 18 months over an intense but valuable weekend.

Some of the experienced mentors recently attended Development Training at St. Mary's Redemptorist Spirituality Centre at Kinnoull in Scotland. In addition to the development of their skills they explored the possibilities of 'new expressions' for the EFM programme. Already we have adapted the US model and now provide significant flexibility. Students can now enrol into the year of their choice, instead of always embarking with Old Testament studies. They can, for example, choose to study Church History for a year, take a couple years off and return to study the New Testament. A number of people are now choosing to use their studies to get a qualification through our partnership with the University College of Chester.

One of the ideas explored at Development Training was the possible introduction of an EFM course comprising of 9-week sessions. This could be used as a 'taster' to EFM or to provide a number of short courses for use in the annual programme of nurture within a local church setting. Anyone interested in piloting this resource and being engaged with undertaking some provisional research is encouraged to contact the EFM Administrator.

We are pleased to announce that the UK will be hosting at the beginning of March 2007 an International Training Event. Ten trainers from the US and the Programme Directors from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK & the US will join a six-day training event at St. Columba's House, Woking. The last International Training of Trainers event took place in 2004 and was so appreciated that the UK EFM Trainers have been asked to staff and organise another in 2007.

During this event a number of respected UK Theologians with an interest in the theory of theological reflection will be joining us. They will experience the EFM model of theological reflection and offer their critique on its appropriateness and application. This is of immense encouragement to EFM UK as we continue to be recognised as providers of quality training. These developments are contributing to EFM's growing reputation for innovation and quality.



### 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](mailto:administrator@efmuk.org.uk)

### Basic Mentor Training

15th – 17th June 2007

Morley Retreat & Conference House,  
Derbyshire

7th – 9th September 2007

St. Columba's House, Woking

EFM UK Management Group

21st April 2007

If you have any issues that you wished discussed, email Joanna Hobart on: [hobartjc@btinternet.com](mailto:hobartjc@btinternet.com)