

Review

2008/09

From the General Secretary



The Challenge of Change

From time to time, every organisation needs to review its goals and objectives and refresh its structures and methods to meet the needs of the next

generation. Over the past three years the Council has been working through such an exercise in relation to the ministry of the FIEC.

This culminated in a process of consultation and decision-making in which the churches of the Fellowship voted through a number of significant changes in the way in which FIEC will function with effect from 1 September 2010. Some of the changes taking place within the FIEC are internal and relate to its governance. However, two big changes are likely to be visible. The first is the establishment of an FIEC Leaders' Conference. The second is the replacement of the existing staffing structure, including the FIEC President and General Secretary, with a senior staff team empowered by the Leaders' Conference and led by an FIEC Director.

The Face of Change

The FIEC Council has appointed John Stevens to serve as FIEC Director from September 2010. He was educated at Cambridge University, where he became a Christian in his final year. John was a law lecturer for 16 years until 2007, combining this role with his responsibilities as one of the three pastors of City Evangelical Church, Birmingham, which he helped to found in 1999. The church now has a regular congregation of 300.

Alongside his other ministries, John is co-chairman of the 'A Passion for Life' steering group, a member of the Midlands Gospel Partnership steering committee and he runs the Midlands Ministry Training Course.

Welcoming the FIEC Assembly's confirmation of John's appointment, FIEC President Rupert Bentley-Taylor commented: "John displays a profound understanding of the days in which we live and of the challenges and opportunities that lie before our churches. He has an inspiring and strategic vision of what, under God, can be done to move the FIEC, and the broader cause of the gospel, forward in our land. He also has a deep theological understanding, a love for God's word and confidence in preaching God's truth both to strengthen the churches and to reach the outsider."

Richard Underwood (General Secretary)

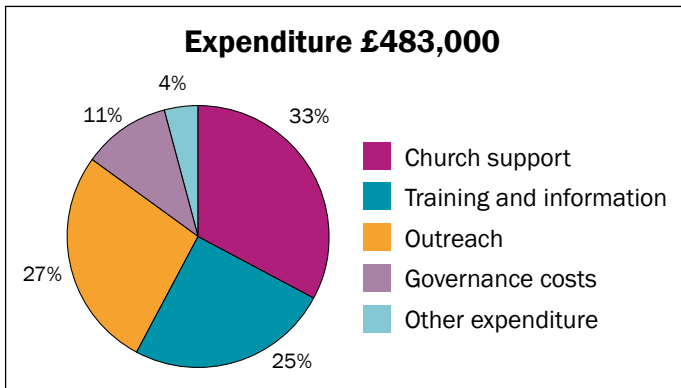
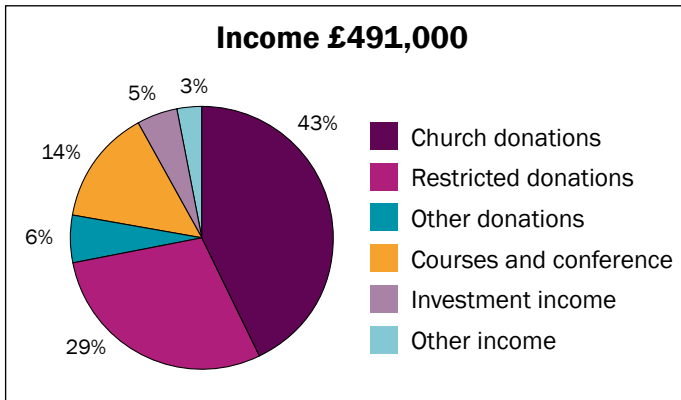


Delegates at the Annual Assembly April 2009

Finance Committee

God has again been very good to us in providing for all the financial needs of the FIEC through the generous giving of our supporters.

Our total income was £491,000, while our total spending was £483,000; both figures were slightly lower than last year. This year we had a surplus of £8,000 compared to £14,000 last year.



A copy of the full Report of the FIEC Council and/or audited accounts can be obtained from the FIEC office on request.

Peter Shelley (FIEC Treasurer)



The official opening of Rehoboth Christian Centre, Blackpool as an independent church

New Church Affiliations

Over the year we have passed a milestone of 500 churches – 503 to be exact – with 17 new churches joining us. Among the new churches we have seen more church plants coming into membership. One example is the work of Rehoboth Christian Centre in Blackpool. Purposely planted by the FIEC in a needy inner-city area of Blackpool, this work has seen many coming to Christ and growing in discipleship. Another example is Ridgeway Church in St. Albans. Planted by Spicer Street Church, this fellowship meeting in a local school has become fully independent during the year. Both are examples of the vision and faith of God's people to reach our communities in this generation.

*Michael Teutsch
(Chairman, Care and Recognition Team)*

Women's Ministry Team

'News and Views' – our bulletin to encourage and inform women involved in ministry – continues to grow in size and, so it seems from the feedback, in appreciation. New additions have been a series of articles on training opportunities and a look at current theological issues. Circulation has grown with 500 copies now being produced. More individuals, Bible colleges and training schemes have requested regular

copies, so much so that a second print run was required for the last edition. Here is one recent comment we have received: "I've just been given a copy of News and Views which I really enjoyed reading and would like to sign up to get this regularly. (I'm currently a wife of a pastor in training)."

*Julia Jones
(Chair, Women's Ministry Team)*



Pastors' Association

Throughout another year the Pastoral Link Team (PLT) has met regularly to pray, discuss and make important decisions about the membership and ministry of the Pastors' Association (PA). During our meetings we have the very great privilege of interviewing men who wish to join the PA, after first reading their detailed application papers and references. Sometimes we have needed to ask other pastors to assist us in the interviewing process because there have been so many applicants. During the year 31 men have been accepted into the PA bringing our membership to 366.

Another vital part of our work is the pastoral introductions service and we are grateful to God that during the year 29 churches or pastors involved in that service have been settled. It is a particular joy when we hear that a church which has not had a pastor for many years has, in the goodness of God, been able to appoint a man.

In March three very helpful 'roadshows' were held in Bristol, Crawley and Chesterfield, where we dealt with 'The Challenge of Evangelistic Preaching'. This has encouraged us to arrange six 'roadshows' during 2010, in Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Bury St Edmunds, Crawley and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The theme will be taken once again from the Pastoral Epistles - 'Watch your life and doctrine closely'.

Basil Howlett (Pastors Association Secretary)

Media

A major development in the last 12 months has been the change of format of 'Together' magazine. The larger, more formal newsletter style has been replaced with a smaller format, more glossy magazine which we hope everyone reading this has seen. We moved our production and design to Inspired Media and have been pleased with the design contribution of one of their staff, Allison Hodgkiss. The first two issues have been very well received and we have been encouraged by the many positive comments so far. In particular, the new format has enabled us to give increased prominence to the many and varied initiatives by FIEC churches to reach out to their communities and it is hoped that this will provide a stimulus to others to adapt such ideas to their own situations. The new magazine also allows us to identify and promote more effectively the three strands of FIEC's ministry in Training, Support and Outreach.

Ian Cooper (Chairman, FIEC Media Team)



Prepared for Service

A review was undertaken of the impact of other 'mid-range' training courses on Prepared for Service (PFS) and in consultation with the Training Team a decision was taken to close PFS North, owing to the drop in applicants in the last 18 months. The final module for PFS North took place in November 2009 and included a Graduation Service for the departing seven students. 10 students also graduated from PFS North in June 2009, as did 15 students from PFS South. With an intake of 11 students for PFS South and two students for PFS North, the total on both courses in September 2009 was 34.

We are very thankful to God for the help and support of Hugh and Joyce Hill who have been administrators of PFS North for the past two years. Together with them, we have greatly appreciated the help of staff and members of both Walton Evangelical Church and Holmgate Evangelical Church, Chesterfield, for their hospitality and help in so many ways.

During May PFS hosted the first week of the inaugural Summer season for the binary course students at Wales Evangelical School of Theology. We joined with one PFS graduate already on the course and we are encouraging others to consider this route into pastoral ministry from PFS. We have been invited to return in 2010.

David and Laraine Cook (PFS Administrators)



PFS South Summer Graduates

Training

The Training Team has had another busy and, we believe, significant year. We continue to work toward our stated aim: "To embed a vibrant culture of ministry in all our churches which is owned at every level through training."

During the year, we produced two issues of the Training Bulletin – 'Think Training'. A copy of this is sent to every FIEC Church correspondent, every member of the Pastors' Association, and all FIEC Partners (formerly Associates). The Winter 2008 issue carried interviews with the principals of three theological colleges with which we have had significant dealings in recent years. These were the London Theological Seminary, Oak Hill College and WEST (Wales Evangelical School of Theology). These Colleges (and others) are increasingly keen to tailor their courses to suit the needs of prospective leaders of FIEC churches, and have been eager to hear our concerns about training for pastoral ministry today. We believe that these links will prove to be of immense significance in the coming years.

The Summer 2009 issue carried John Stevens' vision for the work of the Pastoral Development Team, including a report of the new Theological Students' Conference held in January 2009. There was also an interview with Adrian Reynolds, a Free Church pastor, who is the new Director of Ministry for the Proclamation Trust. These are just two of the many exciting developments in the rapidly-changing training landscape which give us real cause for hope that our training aim will one day be fulfilled.

Recent issues of the bulletin are available in the Training section of the FIEC website. We are grateful to all who contribute, and would encourage pastors and churches to pass on to us their experiences of training or resources which may be useful to others.

*Martyn Hallett
(Chairman -
Training Team)*



Outreach Team

The team has continued to work closely with our employed planters and restorers to enable them to become independent of FIEC management by 31 October 2010. The plans for this are well advanced and we are doing all we can to ensure that the ministry of our brothers is strengthened by this very significant change. We also praise God that financial support for our planters and restorers has been maintained at such a level that the FIEC has been able to continue to pay their full salaries. However, this aspect of the work remains a challenge.

Mike Stringer (Chairman, Outreach Team)

Contagious

Youth Conference: 17-23 August 2009

The venue was again Culford School near Bury St Edmunds with 297 in attendance, including 18 Task Force and 73 leaders.

The main theme of the week was 'Life without God, what's the point?' It is a wonderful privilege to see young people and leaders being stretched and challenged as they study the word of God together. Our prayer at Contagious is that the studying of God's word would cause young people and leaders alike to love Jesus more and want to live lives for him in the places he has put them.

We desire under God to continue to grow Contagious. Culford School continues to work well as a venue for Contagious, but we have reached our maximum number under the current structure. Yet, we are convinced that as young people come face to face with Jesus in the Bible, the impact in their lives is huge. Therefore, with this in mind, in 2010 we are planting not one but two new Contagious conferences, giving us three events in all, as follows:

- **Contagious West** at Hebron Hall in Cardiff from Monday 23 to Sunday 29 August 2010;
- **Contagious East** our regular Contagious Conference at Culford School from Monday 16 to Sunday 22 August 2010; and
- **Contagious Nano** aimed at younger people aged between 11-13 years which will run on the Culford School site at the same time as Contagious East.

Jon Drane (on behalf of the Contagious Core Group)



To find out more about the ministries of FIEC, contact:

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