

1: Welcome to Prepared for Service

A training programme designed to mobilise people for work in the local church

Prepared for Service (PFS) is designed to train people who want to serve God and his people. In partnership with local churches, it provides support for them by training their members. Sponsored by the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, it combines teaching, pastoral care and pastoral support for people from a wide range of local churches.

How did PFS come into being?

The FIEC has been providing information and support to independent evangelical churches and their leaders for over 75 years. Today it is a unique resource for information and a catalyst for fellowship between evangelical churches in the UK.

The FIEC is in regular contact with churches so that it can offer valuable and relevant training opportunities. It is often approached by people who might be able to make a significant contribution to church life if they had a little help. PFS came into being as a response to this need. Its main task involves training and mobilising Christian workers and so strengthening churches.

PfS derives its name and ethos from Ephesians 4 verse 12, for the whole purpose of the course is, *'to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up'*.

What are its aims?

- To assist men and women to develop their knowledge of God's Word. To help them understand his will for their lives and to have a realistic assessment of their gifts and calling.
- To provide a training resource that is of a good academic standard and which presents practical and pastoral models to help course members serve in effective ways in the contemporary world.
- To help aspiring pastors and potential ministry leaders gain experience in a wide variety of aspects of local church life, while awaiting an opening into the ministry. Those with preaching gifts are supported by experienced pastors who provide feedback as preaching and communication skills are developed.
- To introduce people to and develop their awareness of a range of issues facing local churches, whilst testing their gifts so that with increased knowledge and experience they will be able to make greater contributions to church life. Course members are encouraged to pursue the whole 2-year programme, although there is an inbuilt flexibility that allows for some variety if circumstances demand.

1: Welcome to Prepared for Service / continued

Could PfS be the right course for you?

Do you understand where you 'fit' in the Christian community? Have you been able to evaluate your gifts? Do you know how to set about looking for the right kind of training? PfS could help you to reach an informed conclusion and give you advice on training.

Perhaps you have already completed some theological training. PfS can help you re-evaluate your gifts and, if appropriate, train you further whilst you gain 'hands on' experience in your local church.

Are you looking for a way to use a year out before or after university or wondering how to study the Bible seriously while gaining experience alongside mature people? PfS provides you with an attractive answer.

You may be an evangelist or church planter. Perhaps you are from abroad. PfS can offer you theological training while you continue to use your gifts and widen your experience or become orientated to British culture.

The flexibility of the PfS course enables each person on the course to receive individual attention. Once it is established that a person has the necessary calling and gifting for service in a local church, PfS course leaders help them to develop their ministry gifts.

PfS could help you to train leaders in your church

Some churches are thwarted in their attempts to grow because of a lack of leaders. Adding more paid staff is expensive. PfS welcomes opportunities to enter into partnership with churches to train their elders, women's workers, home group leaders, youth leaders and evangelists. There is no need for your

members to leave the church for training. Together we could do it!

The PfS programme aims to serve local churches comprehensively. We are training people whose gifts are in varying ministries, such as administration, schools work, pastoral care, Bible teachers, small group leaders and in other areas. So, if leadership is an area of need in your church, why not consider sponsoring some of your most promising people for the course?

It may be that your Pastor has never had the opportunity for guided study or that he needs to up-date his knowledge and skills. Why not consider sponsoring him to attend the two year course or selected parts of it?

Perhaps early retirement has presented you with new challenges and opportunities for Christian service. Your maturity and experience could be invaluable to your church and the PfS training course can provide you with in-depth Bible study.

Where does PfS take place?

There is one residential training centre:-

PfS is located at The Carey Centre, Anstey Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7JR

The course runs from Monday afternoon – Wednesday evening on the first full week of each month.

2: PfS – How do I start?



All those wishing to be considered for PfS training may first come to any module to “taste” the course. After this initial visit prospective candidates complete an

Application Form, having discussed their wish to do PfS with their Pastor or Church Leader, who completes the **Church Leader Reference Form**.

Copies of the Application & Church Leader Forms are found in back of this folder. They can also be downloaded as Word documents from the FIEC website, completed and emailed to the Administrators. Husbands and wives should complete separate forms. CVs are not required.

Candidates starting PfS in **September 2011** will attend an **Interview Day** on Saturday **2 July 2011**. Candidates wishing to start PfS in **February 2012** should attend an Interview during one of the modules in October - December **2011**.

Sometimes interviews for prospective course members are held at **The Carey Centre, Reading**.

Interview Days involve experienced Pastors in meeting prospective candidates and acting as personal supervisors to them. Candidates will complete a **Bible-related task**, take part in seminars on ‘Getting the most out of the PfS course’ and experience a sample lecture from one of the PfS lecturers. Informal fellowship is also an important part of the day. There is good opportunity to learn about the PfS course and discuss personal circumstances and specific needs.

Before leaving the **Interview Day**, candidates meet with their assessors to receive feedback on their **Bible-related task** and an invitation to join

the PfS course, if appropriate, to which they normally respond in the next seven days.

Married couples are encouraged to attend this day together. This makes for a more effective experience. There is a great advantage in couples considering together the options put before them.

Interview Days are of significance to all who are seeking the Lord's will for their future ministry. Attendance does not oblige course members to continue to the main 2-year PfS course. There are no minimum academic requirements but students are expected to take study seriously. The course is designed for people who are spiritual, teachable and who are willing and able to serve.

Further details may be obtained by contacting the Administrators, whose address is at the bottom of this page.

The 2-Year Training Programme Can I stay in my own church?

Those for whom the 2-year course is appropriate usually continue to serve in their home church. In some cases it may be possible that some seek to be placed in another church which is suitable to their experience, gifts and needs. We aim to ensure that, with the co-operation of church leaders, course members have increased opportunities to develop their skills and enlarge their experience whilst on PfS.

From time to time churches are both given and provide feedback on the progress of course members. This ensures that the PfS training is working to the benefit of all concerned and that the goals set at the start are kept in view.

2: PfS – How do I start? / continued

Each module consists of 2½ days (**Monday** afternoon – **Wednesday** evening) in the **first week** of each of the eight months of a year for study, inter-active learning, pastoral care and fellowship.

This modular training allows course members to join and leave PfS at flexible times appropriate to them. There are four starting points to access the sixteen modules over the two years. However, most people start the course in each September.

PfS enables serving pastors, pastoral assistants, church apprentices/trainees, church planters and others already engaged in Christian work to attend modules of their choice, or even on specific days if they wish.

Those who successfully complete the two year programme are awarded the **PfS Diploma**. A **PfS Certificate** is awarded to course members who either complete just one year or complete most but not the whole of the course.

Completion of the course is also regarded as appropriate prior learning at a foundation level. This may be accredited towards degree-level courses at Bible Colleges, such as the “Binary Course” at Wales Evangelical School of Theology (WEST), or the BA in “Applied Theology” at Moorlands College, Sopley. These options provide further training, which is accredited, should course members wish to top-up and continue their studies as they consider God’s call towards full-time pastoral ministry.

How is the course organised?

It lasts for 16 modules over a two year cycle. Each module has 16 one-hour sessions, making 256 hours of class-based teaching. In addition, the time needed to produce each written assignment could be up to 24 hours during the weeks before the next module. The assignment

work is not normally done all in one go! It would make an additional 384 hours over the 2 years, making the total amount of study time up to about 640 hours.

In a typical module, course members participate in Bible study and have seminars on a specific aspect of systematic theology featured in the FIEC Doctrinal Basis of Faith. (*See page 9*)

The course has **five main components**:-

(a) **Bible Overview** (11% of the time) teaches how to study, understand and appreciate the scope of the whole Bible itself.

(b) **Bible Handling**, or “**Text to Message**” (11% of the time). This enables people to discern the Bible message through the variety of Biblical literary genres and convey its truth with passion to specific groups of people.

(c) **Systematic Theology** (31% of the time). This provides a foundational framework within which course members can understand the central doctrines of the faith.

(d) **Church History** (7% of the time) covers the main events and developments from the early church to the 20th century through selected periods and significant people.

(e) **Applied Theology and Practical Training** (40% of the time). There are teaching sessions, workshops, discussions and assignments relating to subjects, such as:- Leadership, Discipleship, Communication, Church Growth, Creation & Evolution, Youth Ministry, World Mission, Pastoral Care, Church Planting, Evangelism, Apologetics, Guidance, Medical Ethics and Understanding and Reaching Contemporary Society.

(*See Course Summary sheet on page 7*)

3: PfS serving churches

PfS is designed to work in close partnership with evangelical churches, those affiliated to the FIEC and others that are able to sign the doctrinal statement and assent to its policy on ecumenism (see the statements in Section 6). The FIEC's Training Team (TT) desires to see PfS make a significant contribution to the wider fellowship of evangelical churches in the UK. One way in which PfS serves local churches is in helping them to train their own pastors and leaders.

What is involved in caring for PfS course members?

Churches may support their course members in many ways, such as: -

- Where a course member is based in their home church whilst on PfS, a list of explicit aims and learning objectives for the course member should be agreed in order to determine some clear goals for their period of service.
- If the course member is living away from home and serving in a church other than their home fellowship whilst on PfS, they may have additional needs for accommodation.
- Travel expenses to and from Reading might be met. There may be other ways in which churches are able to make finance available and, however little, this is always most helpful.

Who appoints course members?

This is the responsibility of the course leaders in consultation with the church. Care is taken to ensure that course members and churches are well aware of their mutual needs and responsibilities, so that we are able to work together as partners in the gospel.

4: Money Matters

The PfS programme is intended to run with the minimum of expense and the maximum benefit for all. **Carey Baptist Church, Reading** is generous in making their buildings freely available.

When in Reading course members stay with hosts from several local churches. There is a warm fellowship between course members and their host families. Lasting friendships with the host families have developed over the years. There is normally one evening each year when the course members provide a meal for all the host families and share with them how the Lord has blessed them during the course.

All this means that fees have been kept to a minimum.

Course fees

Fees include meals, overnight accommodation and course materials. They are normally payable in advance for the year and should be paid before course members start their first module. Alternative arrangements can be made with the Treasurer in cases of difficulty.

How do course members maintain themselves?

All involved with PfS give of themselves and of their substance sacrificially so that the cause of Christ may be advanced.

Sometimes course members are fully sponsored by their home or sending church. At other times their church may provide partial financial support. Some take early retirement, others have been made redundant and use some of their savings. Others are in part-time work which enables them to give time to their church.

4: Money Matters/continued

* Fees are reviewed at the beginning of each year.	
Interview Day	£30 per single person * £45 per married couple *
Two year 16 module course (from February 2010)	£1380 per year * (£2095* for married couples)
Individual modules	£# per person/married couples # Details from Administrators
Individual whole days	£# per person/married couples # Details from Administrators

The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (Founded 1922) is a Registered Charity No. 263354
Charity registered in Scotland SC040111

How do course members maintain themselves? / continued



Most striking have been the many answers to prayer for the Lord's provision which continues to encourage us to believe that when he calls us to serve him he will supply what we need. Many testify to the strengthening of their faith that such experiences bring.

- Providing a mentor to give study support in the early written assignments. Overseeing the developing opportunities to encourage emerging ministry gifts during the course.

If you would like to discuss any financial matters relating to the course you may contact: –

Church Support for Course Members

It would be helpful for churches sponsoring their members on the PfS course to consider the following:-

- Contributing to part or all of the course fees. Making contributions to travel expenses to attend modules in Reading.
- Helping to pay towards the cost of books and resources for recommended study materials.

Mr Tim Oldridge
FIEC Finance Manager
39 The Point
Rockingham Road
MARKET HARBOROUGH
LE16 7QU
☎ 01858 411555

5: PfS Course Summary at The Carey Centre, Reading

MODULE	DATES	BIBLE OVERVIEW	BIBLE TEXT TO MESSAGE	SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY	CHURCH HISTORY	APPLIED THEOLOGY & PRACTICAL
	Year 1 2010/11 Year 2 2011/12			What we believe about:		
1	6 – 8 September 2010	OT Study #	Introductions and principles	God		Leadership [1] Biblical Manhood.
2	4 – 6 October 2010			God #		Lessons from Learning Curve; Apologetics; Contemporary Society 1; Philosophy of the Age.
3	1 – 3 November 2010		Old Testament Narrative	The Bible	Introduction; Apostolic Fathers; Augustine	Guidance, leading & the Will of God #
4	6 – 8 December 2010	OT Study	Law & Covenant	The Bible #	Visit to British Museum	World Mission
5	7 – 9 February 2011			The Human Race #		Leader's Devotional Life; Creation & Evolution; Pastoral Care [1]
6	7 – 9 March 2011	OT Study #	Wisdom Literature ~ Proverbs	The Human Race		The Cults; Youth Ministry [1]
7	4 – 6 April 2011 Easter Day 24 th		Wisdom Literature ~ Ecclesiastes	The Lord Jesus Christ	Anselm & the Atonement; Luther & the Reformation	Preparation & Preaching; Church Growth #; Bible Study Groups
8	6 – 8 June 2011 8 June Graduation		The Gospels	The Lord Jesus Christ #	Cranmer & the Reformation	Listening Skills; Hinduism
9	5 – 7 September 2011		Review and development	Salvation #	Calvin, Latimer, Bilney; Intertestamental Period 1	Preaching & Preparation; Leadership [2]
10	3 – 5 October 2011	OT Study #	Poetry ~ Psalms	Salvation	Intertestamental Period 2	Youth Ministry [2]; Mental Health
11	7 – 9 November 2011		The Epistles ~ 1 Corinthians #	The Holy Spirit	Shaftesbury; The Victorians; Spurgeon	Worship & Service Leading; Time Management
12	5 – 7 December 2011	OT Study	O.T. Prophecy ~ Haggai/Malachi 1 Cor 14; Acts	The Holy Spirit #	Whitefield	Issues of Medical Ethics
13	6 – 8 February 2012		Pastoral Epistles	The Church #		Biblical Womanhood; Pastoral Care [2] Ministry Life; Role of a Pastor's Wife
14	5 – 7 March 2012	NT Study #	Acts	The Church	The Wesleys; Jonathan Edwards	Divorce & Remarriage
15	2 – 4 April 2012 Easter Day 8 th		Apocalyptic Literature	The Future #	Martyn Lloyd Jones 1	Islam; Sikhism Contemporary Society 2
16	4 – 6 June 2012 6 June Graduation		The Theology of Preaching	The Future	Martyn Lloyd Jones 2; 20 th Century	Evangelism #; Preparing / Preaching Sermons

Course details and topics are under regular review and are subject to changes at any time.

Module assignments set on this subject

5: Course Summary / continued

The course will give you the opportunity to study the scriptures and learn the practical skills that you will need in church life. As well as lectures, seminars and workshops, there are devotional times for worship, prayer and fellowship with other course members. These training modules are both a learning opportunity and a source of pastoral support and encouragement.

Systematic Theology studies focus on the central doctrines of the Faith and relate these to the issues that are facing Christians today. For example -

➤ **What we believe about the Bible**

The inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, modern views of prophecy and supposed errors or contradictions in the Bible. Why are there only sixty-six books?

➤ **What we believe about Salvation**

God saves. Some major aspects of salvation: redemption, regeneration, justification and adoption. What is true conversion? How to help Christians with temptation. What about deliverance ministries? Once saved, always saved?

Church History

Tracing the development of the church and examining the issues of faith and belief.

Bible Overview

Introducing each of the books in the Bible; Biblical Theology and Hermeneutics. Developing a greater appreciation of God's purposes in the world.

Applied Theology & Practical Ministries

covered in the course include: -

➤ **Leadership**

Managing your time, learning to handle criticism, understanding your leadership style. Effective delegation, motivating other people and leading meetings so that things get done.

➤ **Contemporary Society & Apologetics**

Understanding humanism, relativism and pluralism. Political correctness (race, class, gender). Multi-cultural awareness. Power and powerlessness (debt, addiction, homelessness). New age thinking. Post modernism.

➤ **Evangelism**

Bringing people to faith. The priority of word-based evangelism. The use and abuse of music, drama and other media. Evangelistic strategies, social concern and action with an evaluation of current approaches and emphases.

➤ **Communication**

Awareness of the issues in preaching, communication, preparing sermons, working with small groups, leading worship and reaching and teaching people of all ages.

Text to Message

Understanding, interpreting and communicating the truth of the Biblical text.

Assignments

After each module there is a written task to complete, which is usually an essay of up to 2000 words length. This can take up to 24 hours of reading and written study time, but not normally all in one go!

6: What we Believe

➤ The FIEC's Doctrinal Basis of Faith

The churches of the **Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches** are committed to these truths of historic, biblical Christianity:

1 GOD

There is one God, who exists eternally in three distinct but equal persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God is unchangeable in his holiness, justice wisdom and love. He is the almighty Creator, Saviour and Judge who sustains and governs all things according to his sovereign will for his own glory.

2 THE BIBLE

God has revealed himself in the Bible, which consists of the Old and New Testament alone. Every word was inspired by God through human authors, so that the Bible as originally given is in its entirety the Word of God, without error and fully reliable in fact and doctrine. The Bible alone speaks with final authority and is sufficient for all matters of belief and practice.

3 THE HUMAN RACE

All men and women, being created in the image of God, have inherent and equal dignity and worth. Their greatest purpose is to obey, worship and love God. As a result of the fall of our first parents, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted and all men and women are without spiritual life, guilty sinners and hostile to God. Every person is therefore under the just condemnation of God and needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God in order to know and please him.

4 THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully Man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught with authority and all his words are true. On the cross he died in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by his blood. He rose from the dead and in his resurrection body ascended into heaven where he is exalted as Lord of all. He intercedes for his people in the presence of the Father.

5 SALVATION

Salvation is entirely the work of God's grace and cannot be earned or deserved. It has been accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ and is offered to all in the gospel. God in his love forgives sinners whom he calls, granting them repentance and faith. All who believe in Christ are justified by faith alone, adopted into the family of God and receive eternal life.

6 THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ and to apply his work of salvation. He convicts sinners, imparts spiritual life and gives a true understanding of the Scriptures. He indwells all believers, brings assurance and produces increasing likeness to Christ. He builds up the church and empowers its members for worship, service and mission.

7 THE CHURCH

The universal church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, the administering of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for pastoral care and discipline, and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care and encouragement. True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel.

8 BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been given to the churches by Christ as visible signs of the gospel. Baptism is a symbol of union with Christ and entry into his Church but does not impart spiritual life. The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice offered once for all and involves no change in the bread and wine. All its blessings are received by faith.

9 THE FUTURE

The Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. The wicked will be sent to eternal punishment and the righteous will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new and will be glorified for ever.

➤ **Statement on Ecumenism from FIEC, Agreed in Assembly April 1996**

All gospel-loving Christians face many kinds of tension, but there is one particular way in which we are increasingly pressurised at the present time. Since the formation of the Churches Together movement in 1991, with its avowed aim to pursue ecumenism at the local level, we are constantly being urged to join other churches in united services, prayer meetings, marches and evangelistic activities.

If all the other local churches and their leaders involved in a united activity are wholly committed to the one true gospel there is no problem. Indeed the FIEC desires to encourage that kind of true and biblical ecumenism.

Often, however, some of the churches and leaders with whom we are urged to unite neither believe nor preach those essential gospel truths which are embodied in our FIEC Doctrinal Basis or a similar Statement of Faith. Some do not accept the inerrancy of Scripture, the eternal punishment of the unsaved, or that Christ died bearing the punishment due to sinners. Some deny the deity of Christ, his virgin birth, miracles and literal resurrection. Others teach that religious ceremonies such as baptism, the mass and the adoration of Mary have some saving efficacy.

The FIEC has always felt it to be confusing and unbiblical to unite in public acts of worship and outreach with those who question and deny the faith. Our Doctrinal Basis, 'What we Believe', clearly states,

'True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel'.

If an evangelical church or leader unites with those of a liberal persuasion who deny essential gospel truths, or with those of a Roman Catholic persuasion who add to the gospel, then great confusion is created. The impression is given either that the evangelical, liberal and Roman Catholic are all agreed when in fact they are worlds apart doctrinally, or that their different messages are equally valid when in fact there is only one gospel. Not only is this confusing but it is also a contradiction of the gospel on which our FIEC churches unite.

The gospel of salvation by grace is so precious to us that we desire to stand together with all who believe and preach it. For the same reason, we are compelled to remain separate from those who deny it. By taking this position we are seeking to follow the commands of Scripture. (Galatians 1:8, Romans 16:17)



7: Introducing some of the PfS Course Leaders

Over 35 course leaders visit PfS to lecture and lead practical sessions. In addition to their theological and professional training they draw on many years experience as leaders of local churches.

The following are regularly involved:-

Rupert Bentley-Taylor

Pastor of Widcombe Baptist Church, Bath. He is currently President of the FIEC and is responsible for lecturing on 'Pastoral Care'.

Peter Comont

Formerly Associate Pastor of Eden Chapel, Cambridge and now Pastor of Magdalen Road Church, Oxford, he leads our **Text to Message** track. He teaches at the South Central Ministry Training Course, Oxford and involved in the "Living Leadership" initiative.

David Earnshaw

Formerly Pastor of Freshbrook Evangelical Church, Swindon, David oversees and teaches much of our **Church History** track. His lectures on the Intertestamental Period are "legendary"!

Brian Edwards

Former Pastor of Hook Evangelical Church, Surbiton, he was President of FIEC from 1995-98. He is an author, Bible teacher and preacher with an extensive itinerant ministry.

Basil Howlett

After pastorates in Cheltenham, Clevedon and Wrexham, now retired as Pastor of Carey Baptist Church. He serves as a member of the PfS Team and is Secretary to the FIEC Pastors' Association.

Paul Mallard

Senior Pastor of Woodgreen Evangelical Church, Worcester until August 2010, FIEC President until 2007 and Chairman of the PfS Board until November 2008. Paul now is the Director of the Midlands Ministry Training Course. He lectures on the Doctrines of 'God' and 'Salvation'.

Simon Medcroft

Formerly assistant Pastor at Carey Baptist Church, he is now Pastor of Danbury Evangelical Mission, Essex. He is responsible for the **Bible Overview** element of the course and has represented PfS on the FIEC Training Team from November 2009.

David Long

Having been Pastor at Southcote Mission in Reading, he is now retired and living in Reading. With the help of his wife, Kath, he is **Pastor to the Course Members**, succeeding **Colin Paris**, who retired from the role in December 2010.

Andrew Paterson

Pastor of Kensington Baptist Church, Bristol, President of FIEC from 2001 – 2004 and Chairman of the PfS Board until 2005. Andrew takes our studies in 'Leadership' and, with his wife Kath, together teach on "Ministry Life".

Jonathan Stephen

Former Pastor of Carey Baptist Church, Reading, where PfS began in 1994 and FIEC President from 1998-2001. Jonathan was the first Director of Affinity and now Principal of the Wales Evangelical School of Theology (WEST). He was PfS Chairman until December 2004 and leads our studies on 'Contemporary Society'.

Among other pastors and experienced leaders who contribute are the following: -

Gary Benfold	Trevor Pearce
Chris Bennett	Steve Scrivener
Paul Garner	Chris Sinkinson
Eric Harmer	Sheila Stephen
Bill James	Mike Stringer
John Ling	Colin Tamplin
Howard Mason	Steve Wilmshurst
Michael Ots	Jim Winter