

Annual report

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Chairman's Report

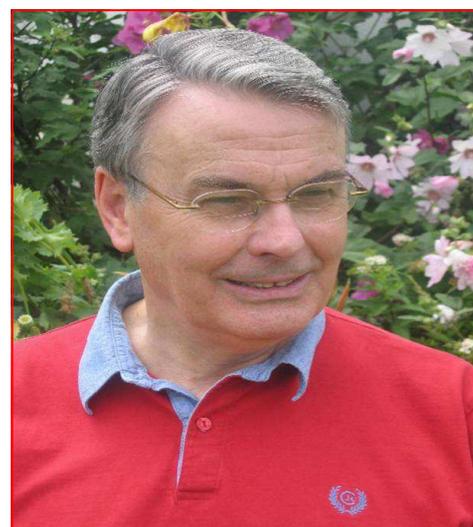
John Betts

What a privilege to serve the work of God in Norwich. It has been my joy to do that as chair of Transforming Norwich for four years now.

Our Mission

Our mission statement is "Making Norwich a fine community" something which I know is on the heart of many in this city.

I was struck at the turn of the year by the sight of the city walls, broken down yet now dressed up as a tourist attraction. I felt, like Ezra of old, I could hear both weeping and rejoicing rising from the people. Weeping at the ongoing lack of quality of life that is the lot of many - morally, spiritually, physically and materially. People who live with the results of their own choices but who also bear the consequences of the choices that others have made for them. And the rejoicing of those who see what God has done, in and through His people



as we serve together in many and varied ways. However we have a long way to go if our mission statement is to become a reality. We need to see every congregation and Christian organisation co-operating together, working in unity, with all our diversity, if we are to make even more serious inroads into the need which confronts us.

Pioneering

Here in Norwich we are pioneering new ways of being the corporate church. Accepting that no one congregation, or Christian Organisation, can bring in the

Kingdom of God. Believing that we all have something to give. I was talking with a Pastor friend recently who told me of their most successful community event yet. The event was called "Give something, Take something". The idea was simply that - give anything you have to give and take anything you wish to take, for free. The more we can operate in that spirit together the nearer we shall be to achieving God's purpose amongst us and through us. We do not need walls between us to keep our people in but open doors for people to come and go as the Lord leads.

Call to Prayer

I believe we took a significant step forward in our work when we commissioned Jill Gower and Call to Prayer in March this year. The intent was to give open, public recognition to prayer ministry in Norwich and Norfolk. We need the strength which God supplies in answer to our prayers. We have an army of intercessors who call upon the Lord on our behalf. I urge church leaders to release your praying men and women and put them in touch with Call to Prayer for their encouragement and support and our increased blessing.

Funding

A key area for much Christian work is funding! We shall be addressing this subject at our AGM this year. What a difference it would make to the work of God in Norwich if we could find a way to share the finances which are already

in our bank accounts, for the sake of the Kingdom. This of course presupposes a level of openness and trust beyond the normal. We want to invest wisely but so often we want to control how what we give is used, rather than trusting those who receive our gifts to use them well. It would be amazing if we could find the Holy Spirit's way of breaking the log jam and enter a new world together.

Resources

Finally an area of concern to many in Norwich currently is Christian resources. We have lost our long standing and much appreciated suppliers and must therefore find a new way of accessing the resources which are so necessary to us all. I have been seeking to bring together a broad based coalition of people to begin the process of doing just that. However, it is clear it will not happen over night, we will need to be patient. Please support us in prayer and any other way you are able. We shall keep all interested parties fully informed of our progress.

Long may Transforming Norwich continue to prosper and increase as we seek to "make Norwich a fine community."

We would like to offer our thanks to :

THE JERUSALEM TRUST

Who have helped us with the costs for this day

Call to Prayer

Jill Gower

In the last few months, the ministry of Call to Prayer has moved into a completely new place. With the encouragement and support of John and Doreen Betts as spiritual advisors, and Transforming Norwich, we are now in the process of obtaining charity status and have an amazing team of around 20 people.

Adopt a week

Following a suggestion by Nicholas Vesey we have set up Adopt a Week of Prayer which continues to grow amongst the churches, and we now have a very comprehensive resource pack in our "prayer box" which has a variety of material suitable for a wide range of churches. We are encouraging churches to take on a week each, so that for a whole year our city, towns and villages can be saturated in prayer for our city. Our aim is to encourage churches to pray for all aspects of society, using different prayer styles.

Prayer School

To support this, I have begun to run a monthly Prayer School. This has proved very popular and offers two sessions, one for the more traditional church and one for the charismatic. Teaching on prayer is not often covered in churches, and I feel we provide much needed training in this area. I am also raising up a team to be equipped to go into the churches if required to work alongside congregations.

Wells

Another area of our ministry is Redigging the Wells. The importance of the church in our

city's foundation has influenced every part of life of Norwich down the ages. This group of Christians come from a variety of churches working together to seek new life in these old "wells" and build on what has gone before. Working in three groups (History, Prayer Walkers, Intercessors), their strategy is to divide the city into 12 segments. We are currently prayer walking one of the sections on a twice weekly basis.

Tabernacle

The Tabernacle is becoming a main area of our prayer ministry and is a wonderful visual aid. Its purpose is for people to encounter God in a deeper way, and many have experienced this as they have come into new understanding of approaching God. We normally begin with a teaching session, followed by a session of prayer and worship. The Tabernacle is going to go up in Kirby Bedon for three weeks from mid- May, and will be open for church groups, individuals and school parties.

Our intercessors cover such things as Street Pastors, Alpha, and Every Home is Special and support Hope 2008 and Prayer in the Park.

Christian Aid finds new Partners

Eldred Willey

We are so grateful to all that has happened over the last year. It has been a time of extraordinary growth, of extending the tent ropes.

Partnerships

One of the most fulfilling aspects has been new partnerships with churches.

We have been invited to help run a number of worship-and-justice evenings, at Ipswich International Church, Newmarket Community Church and Thetford Pentecostal Church. This has forged some valuable new friendships and given us new bases from which to extend our work.

We are especially grateful to the Fountain of Life church in Ashill for hosting a concert by the Kairos band.

Baptist

For the first time, we have had many opportunities to help run events in Baptist Churches, from

Kings Lynn to Yarmouth, from Fakenham to Norwich itself.

One unique and deepening partnership is that with Norwich Youth for Christ. We have been sharing with them our youth worker Hazel Palmer, and they have loaned us their faith-filled Brazilian worker Josie Archibald to help us connect with Portuguese-speaking congregations. We must also thank NYFC for training in video production and editing.

The year has seen volunteers taking on more substantial roles, including Janet, Sue and Tors in the office. Our youth co-ordinator Pete McAllen has built up a young volunteer team to go into schools, and for the first time we have a cluster of student volunteers led by Laura Fenson, putting on events at UEA. Our administra-

tor Monica Barnham has achieved take-off in co-ordinating volunteer speaking engagements, with just two arranged in 2007, but 28 in 2008.

Chair

The Norwich Christian Aid Commission under the chairmanship of Bill Myall decided unanimously to release five of its



members to launch a new group. Led by Sarah George from Cornerstone Church, this will focus on work in schools, and on raising the profile of Christian Aid in the media.

Meanwhile Bill Myall brought to pass his vision of organising a lecture by Professor Mike Hulme, the UK's leading expert on climate change. Dr Hume, who attends Holy Trinity Church, gave a deeply Christian presentation, a call to conver-

sion to the climate change movement. He encouraged it to move from lament, fear and hubris to celebration, hope and humility.

By the time this is printed we will have held our first residential summer camp for young people, in partnership with the Bramerton Churches, the New Hope Centre and Norwich Family Life Church. We will also be looking forward to our first sponsored canoeing event.

Hope '08

Mark Tuma

Hope08 has presented the church across the country with a tremendous challenge and opportunity during this year and beyond. In the last year Norwich Youth For Christ and Transforming Norwich have been encouraging local churches to take hold of this initiative and "*do more, do it together, do it in word and deed.*"

High points

In case anyone has missed the promotional effort, the basic premise behind Hope08 is that the whole church needs to engage with the whole community, and in a more effective and committed way than we have managed in the past. Hope08 has aimed to help this by setting out five 'high points' for activity throughout this year, three of which have already passed. Across the country churches have grasped the challenge to varying degrees, but how are we doing here in Norwich?

Risk

We have seen a number of activities already this year, and there are more

planned for the rest of 2008. It is fair to say that Hope08 has inspired a number of events and programmes, and that it has been a catalyst for some to work together in new ways – often being willing to take more risk than would have been possible alone for the sake of reaching their communities. However, it is also fair to say that other cities in the UK have made more of the opportunities presented during 2008, and that there is scope for Norwich and Norfolk to catch up! One of the great things about Hope08 is that it was never intended to be just a one year event, but actually to bring a shift in our mindset which would have lasting impact on our churches and communities. Bearing that in mind there are still many exciting possibilities for Hope08, even if we do not see some of those for months or years to come!

For more information on some of the things happening locally, or to share your ideas and events, please visit www.hope-norfolk.com.



Network Norwich Website

Keith Morris

The www.networknorwich.co.uk website has now been online for two-and-a-half years and has become a widely-used and accepted part of the Norwich Christian community and its communications.

Its primary aim is to act as a first port of call for anybody wanting information or news about the Norwich Christian community and to be a two-way channel of communication and connection for that community.

Event Watch

Transforming Norwich was the first partner organisation to see the potential of the website and remains a key part of it.

It has its own partner website within Network Norwich and its Event Watch e-newsletter and events are hosted within the overall site.

Over 90 greater Norwich churches are listed in the directory alongside 34 Christian projects. Hundreds of news articles, forum posts and poll votes are now on the site from all sections of the Norwich and wider Norfolk Christian community.

Partners

Partner sites within Network Norwich have also been developed for: Norwich Central Churches Together, Dreams & Visions, Alpha Norfolk, Norwich FGBMFI, Call to Prayer, Thorpe & Heartsease Christian Forum, Norwich Area URCs, Good Work and Norfolk Street Pastors.



Visitors

Visitors to the site have been growing steadily and around 5-6,000 different people visit the site every month and view a total of around 120,000 pages between them.

The popular weekly e-news bulletin is now received by over 1500 people and the site can easily be found through search engines such as Google.

Survey

Over 170 users responded to a survey in February with 96% of them saying news was a real favourite and 74% saying events also were. The church directory and partner websites were also popular as were the action zones, forums, training and job vacancies.

Regular users

Some 90% of regular users visit the site every week, 60% when they receive the weekly e-mail bulletin. The e-news bulletin is very popular with readers and around three-quarters of those who receive it say they like the bulletin being sent out weekly. People said they use information from the website to reproduce in their own church newsletters and to pray about.

Community

"It gives a real sense of our Christian community in Norwich," said one reader, "it is a good resource for Christians and for people who are on the edge of the church," said another.

other. "It is an invaluable and up-to-date communications link," was another comment.

"It keeps us all informed and united," said someone else. "It's the place where we can locally come together and be connected like the joints in Ephesians of the body of Christ," said another. "I would dearly love to see the rest of Norfolk included in this website," said a different reader.

If you would like to submit any news or information for the site or to sign up for the free e-newsletter simply email web@networknorwich.co.uk with details.

The City/Church Dialogue

Nicholas Vesev

This year saw a move forward in the life of the City/Church Dialogue. We encouraged churches and Christian Organisations to nominate members to the Dialogue - enabling them to have direct contact with the City Council.

34 Churches and Christian Organisations nominated people, and we had our first meeting of this newly constituted body in November 2007.

Although Laura McGillivray, the City's Chief Executive, was scheduled to speak, she was rushed to hospital with appendicitis, and her place was taken by Bridget Buttinger, the head of Organisation and Development.

Bridget shared the vision of the City Council, and we discussed it together.



We also looked at the Every Home is Special Campaign. Our second meeting was in March, and at this meeting Laura McGillivray was there to address us.

We also launched a campaign to get church members to help with

reading in schools.

The dialogue has grown over the last year, and has begun to link into some of the other structures that enable us to have an influence in the city, such as the 'Third sector Forum'.

I am delighted that John Drake, The CEO of YMCA Norfolk has agreed to take over as the chair of this group, and we are all very excited about the experience he will bring with him.

Finance**John Easton****SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/3/08**

	£	£
INCOME		
Subscriptions Member Churches	1945	
Subscriptions Member Organisations	500	
Subscriptions Individual	10	
Bank Interest	100	
Contributions to AGM 2007	395	
Sale of Computer Labels	<u>10</u>	
		2960
EXPENDITURE		
Cost of AGM 2007	340	
Contribution to cost of Network Norwich	550	
Computer System	278	
Display Stands	242	
Office Expenses - Secretarial	488	
Office Expenses - Printing, Postage, Stationery, Telephone	203	
Newsletter Entry Network Norwich (Call to Prayer)	75	
Pamphlets for Chain of Prayer	<u>32</u>	
		<u>2208</u>
Surplus of Income over Expenditure		<u><u>752</u></u>
FUNDS		
Balance at Bank 1/4/07		
Barclays Current Account		969
Barclays Business Premium Account		58
Standard Life 10-day Notice Account		2374
Surplus for 2007/8		<u>752</u>
Total Funds		<u><u>4153</u></u>
Represented by:		
Balance at Bank 31/3/08		
Barclays Current Account		880
Standard Life 10-day Notice Account		<u>3273</u>
		<u><u>4153</u></u>