



Fresh Expressions of Church

A 'fresh expression' is a new form of church for our changing culture. All over the country Christians are stepping out in faith and beginning to start

these new forms of church that meet the needs of our changing culture. Every fresh expression is different. Some are in rural areas and others in inner city. Some in new housing areas. Others are primarily for young people, or children and their carers. Some are based in schools or homes.

Each is a new adventure for the gospel. We have much to learn from the Church worldwide. "This is a God given time of opportunity. As our world changes, we are called to proclaim the gospel afresh for a new generation and so to grow fresh expressions of church." (From *Starting a Fresh Expression* © The Archbishops Council 2006)

We live in a turbulent time of change. Many beyond the borders of church are desperate for some sense of spiritual reality. "Fresh expressions" of church are the green shoots of the future." (The Revd Tom Stuckey, President of the Methodist Conference 2005/6).

Currently about 100 people from 3 denominations including the URC are coming together at Chandlers Ford to explore possibilities and for encouragement, teaching and support. Further information can be found on the fresh expressions website www.freshexpressions.org.uk

There are Fresh Expressions within the URC. Wessex Synod's Mission and Outreach Committee want to locate them and offer support, maybe through a network. If you are just beginning to sense God's call, if you are starting a fresh expression, or if you are already some way down the road, we would love to hear from you.

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A VISION of the CALLING of EACH LOCAL CHURCH

(an extract from the Wessex Synod strategy document)

The calling of the local church is to fulfil God's purpose in its own situation.

The local churches should be communities where:

- ✓ Worship leads people to an encounter with the living God
- ✓ All five marks of mission (see below) are central to the church's ministry.
- ✓ Members have a clear understanding of the church's calling and regularly evaluate their life and witness.
- ✓ Vibrant and effective denominational and ecumenical relations are being sought

How does this church measure up on these four points?
How could it be made even more effective?

The five marks of mission are :

- ✓ to proclaim the good news of the kingdom ('Tell')
- ✓ to teach, baptize and nurture new believers ('Teach')
- ✓ to respond to human need by loving service ('Tend')
- ✓ to seek to transform unjust structures of society ('Transform')
- ✓ to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, to sustain and renew the life of the earth ('Treasure')