



PLANTING PAPERS

(October - December 1991)

Planting Papers Issue No. 3

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Planting Papers aims to promote all aspects of church planting within the Baptist Union and beyond. All contributors, in sympathy with this aim, have full freedom of expression, and views cannot be said necessarily to represent those of the BACUP executive or editors.

BACUP Executive

David Coffey - General Secretary of the Baptist Union

Geoffrey Reynolds - Southern Area Superintendent (Baptist Union)

Stuart Christine - Oasis Director of Church Planting and Evangelism

Editors: Steve Hill and Gerry Barlow

BACUP, c/o 189 South Norwood Hill,
London SE25 6DJ

Planting People, the Human Factor by Mike Hearn

'Churches are made up of people.' This may seem an odd, even unnecessary, thing to say, but how many churches have come unstuck, and how many Christians become totally disillusioned because they have not properly come to terms with this fact. It is undoubtedly true to say that the health of any church, and the success of any new church plant, depends, to a large degree, upon the health of the relationships of the people involved; - their individual and corporate relationships with God, and their relationships with one another. We can **probably all think of** churches which have been torn apart and rendered ineffective simply because the members couldn't get on with each other, or some dominant individuals insisted on things being done *their way*.

God is Pretty Reliable

When planning a new church plant there are many factors that have to be taken into account, but possibly the one we need to give most attention to is the human factor. Some may



C. Peter Wagner and his wife at the recent BACUP conference - review page 10

disagree and say: No, surely the divine elements are more important. I know what they mean, but in my experience God is pretty reliable, He won't let us down, He won't get stroppy or throw a tantrum. He can generally work with anyone and is by nature gracious and forgiving. Unfortunately your average Christian often isn't.

The smaller the core-group for the church-plant the more important it is to make sure that you've got the right people involved. Are you going for a missionary couple or small team? Then it's vital they can get on with each other, and that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Even if you're using a slightly larger core group, such as a well established Home Group there are still problems that need to be anticipated. For example, some may experience a sense of loss, isolation, even bereavement when the new church is severed from the 'mother church', or there may be power struggles between different members of the group as they see the new work as an opportunity to force through their own agendas. We must never forget that we are dealing with people, and people have feelings, needs, hopes, aspirations, characters and personalities. They are all different, and they often carry with them a lot of 'baggage' from the past.

Identifying Planters

O.K. then, we want to plant a church (and who doesn't these days?). What sort of people do we want? Well firstly let's identify the sort of people we *don't* need.

1. Those who are malcontents, who have fallen out with other churches over secondary or personality issues, rather than over theological or gospel issues.
2. Those whose personal or spiritual lives are a shambles.
3. Those with no time or energy to give to the church.
4. Those whose personal, social or emotional problems are such that the church is going to be sucked dry before it can get off the ground.
5. Those who are prejudiced or judgmental.
6. Those with very fixed ideas about everything.

Obviously it is impossible to make blanket

rules about who should or shouldn't be involved. Every situation is different. But these are areas I believe require careful consideration.

On the other hand, these are the sort of people you should look out for:-

1. Those with faith, vision, enthusiasm and a sense of humour.
2. Those with stickability and perseverance.
3. Those who are committed and reliable.
4. Those who are open-hearted and accepting.
5. Those who have free spirits, willing to break with tradition and take risks.

And above all:

6. Those who have learned about the primacy of God's love. How else is the new church going to survive the early years of slog and disappointment, of the same few folk meeting together unless they have a real love for one another? And how will that church make any lasting impact upon their neighbourhood unless they are expressing and communicating that love to the people outside the church; in words and deeds appropriate to where they are planting?

Flourishing Relationships

There is nothing more powerful than the love of God ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit.

- ♦ God's love that accepts people just the way they are, no matter who they are.
- ♦ God's love that heals, restores and sets free the broken, hurting, rejected person.
- ♦ God's love that transcends all the natural, human and social barriers.

Where the love of God is properly understood relationships can flourish in a healthy, life-enriching way. A church where this love is evident will be a safe place to be; people can open up without fear of rejection. People can make mistakes. Leaders can expose their humanness. Children can be nurtured. Everyone can contribute. Age, education and ethnicity will not be barriers.

We will have to work hard at building good relationships with those outside the church, ensuring that the church gets known in the

neighbourhood, above all else, for its love. It is a sad reflection on our modern society that even genuine expressions of sympathy and kindness can be greeted with suspicion and declension. We have to persevere for it takes time to build good relationships.

When planting a new church we have a marvellous opportunity to 'get it right', like an artist sitting before a blank canvas, or a gardener with a clear patch of ground. It is up to the people involved, working together with God, to

plant something that will, in time, bear much fruit. It is a scriptural principle that if the roots are good, and the tree healthy, then the fruit will naturally follow.

God has chosen to build His church using ordinary fallible people such as you and I. Taking account of the human factor in church-planting is vital. We ignore it at our peril.

Mike Hearn is Senior Pastor of Chelsea Baptist Church, London.

“From the Sharp End...”

Using Community Networks

by Russ Parkes

Starting new churches offers the opportunity of looking afresh at issues relating to reaching the unchurched. It offers opportunities to cut free from the unhelpful baggage of maintenance minded churchmanship. This can be difficult to shake off. What a tragedy if in the planting of churches we simply replicated our cultural irrelevance believing that we were breaking new ground. Church planting has to be radical if it is to be relevant. Church planting has to be relevant if it is to be radical. That is, relevant to the community it seeks to serve.

“What I have in mind is evangelism which embraces the existing community networks, seeking to work through them and not against them.”

sector. Rather what I am suggesting here is that we recognise afresh that we belong to the counter culture of the Kingdom where Jesus is King. A counter culture yes, but not a counter network ignoring the fabric of networks already existing in every community. What I have in mind is evangelism which embraces the existing community networks, seeking to work through them and not against them whilst at the same time not necessarily embracing their standpoint.

Working networks not individuals

But in what ways should this be done? Rather than looking at a strategy for the local church to reach individuals perhaps we should have a fresh look at working through existing community networks. If we were to work by respecting existing social networks and seeking to build on them perhaps we would avoid unseen resistance. And if we can find a way to build on these networks then could we also enhance our effectiveness in reaching the unchurched? Not that we simply become yet another self-help group working in the voluntary

Networks affecting church planting viability

I suggest several factors should be taken into account when considering a new church plant: i) Where does a significant part of the community see the focal point of its life? ii) And is the geographical area small enough to feel local to the community? iii) Does a large enough proportion of the community recognise this?

I have recently been involved in a new church plant in the north eastern sector of Peterborough (population 30,000). We have

been considering how best to reach the area. Firstly we had to decide that one additional church was not going to reach all 30,000 at one bite. We commissioned a survey to assess attitudes of the community as a whole to the idea of a new church. We were certain that God had spoken to us and what He was asking us to do. But where should this work be focused? This survey greatly helped us to decide which areas to leave alone for now and which areas seemed to be more fertile.

Our second consideration was to group the results into definable and discernible sub community groupings. Initially we identified five such groupings based on such things as types of housing, boundaries, shops, school. In the light of further knowledge this now stands at eleven.

Thirdly we also canvassed the opinions of those who influenced the community in any way. All church leaders were visited, the community association, the school head teacher and we met with Social Services and asked them to identify the needs within the area. We were warmly welcomed by all and have continued to develop good relationships with many opportunities arising from them.

Decisions

Looking again at what God seemed to be saying through this we decided that two areas were of special importance. Both were primary school catchment areas. Both showed a high degree of receptivity to our questionnaire. Both were well defined patches. Both were not actively served by other local churches. For instance when asked 'If a new church was started in this area would you be interested in receiving a visit?' 20% said yes in the two school catchment areas in question as opposed to 7% in other school catchment areas. When asked 'Would you like to receive publicity if a new church was started in this area?' 56% answered yes in the most receptive areas. Our choice of site was influenced for the start of the new work by these results. Our search for premises began and our choice was made when one school was willing to let part of its premises to us. We also approached the Social Services for the use of adjoining premises to complete our requirements. **At that time we failed to fully recognise the importance of existing net-**

works and how we could both serve other organisations and use them for the furtherance of the Kingdom.

In the two years since the work has started we have been able to build on this in a variety of ways. For instance we now mail all those who work in the community - some 80 people - with our quarterly news letter. This same piece is then distributed to every home door to door in the area. We have also held high profile events like an alternative halloween which we publicised with the cooperation of two head teachers. This publicity sought to speak a sensitive message expressing our concerns about halloween and advertised our constructive alternative. For us the essence of our actions was aimed at generally influencing the community - the fact that two hundred people attended it was a bonus which surprised us!

Where now?

But it's left me pondering what realistic prospect remains for further new churches in the patch. Well using this networked approach **I cannot foresee a church planting strategy being successful if based on one church per 1000 of population** as is being suggested by some at present. I say this not because I believe the receptivity rate too low nor that we are able to reach significant numbers of people per thousand of population but on the basis of available centres of community identity. However I do foresee the possibility of a further eight new churches at some future point based on identifiable networks which could be the basis of a new Christian community and the availability of suitable meeting accommodation. A further two could be commenced now on the basis of a favourable receptivity as seen in our community survey, although one would want to check if the perceptions are at the same levels as two years ago. This would be quite crucial since the area has a high mobility rate. The limitation is sufficient personnel. 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.'

Russ Parkes is part of the leadership team at Harris Street Baptist Church, Peterborough.

To Build Or Not To Build?

- A Checklist for Church Planters!

by Lewis Misselbrook

Lewis Misselbrook explains the issues considered by a newly-planted church in deciding to build their own premises.

Feasibility:

1. Is a new church needed there?
2. Is a Baptist church needed there?
3. Are there now (or soon to be) sufficient people living in the catchment area? (10,000 is the sort of figure to think of.)
4. Do we need a building of our own for such a church?
5. Would we be able to secure a good site and how soon would we be compelled by the local authorities to build on it?
6. Will we be able and ready by that time to afford to begin building on it?
7. Can we see the possibility of providing (even in stages) spaces and facilities for 3-500 people?

They decided to go ahead beginning in a school but after a few months were thinking about the possibility of a building of their own. The points they considered were:

Against a Building:

1. We are well situated in the school and will not have as good facilities (at least for some time) in a building of our own.
2. A building means the church concentrating on fabric and finance and away from our present concentration on mission. Some who go that way find it hard to get back to a vision of mission once it is lost. We need to keep mission as the main purpose of the church.
3. It will tie up the church's resources for the next 10 years - the years of most importance and opportunity. Are we prepared to find our mission activities curtailed?
4. When you have a building it is difficult not to fill it with a multitude of organisations which keep members too busy to get on with the real work of mission. Building or no building we must avoid becoming 'organisation-bound'.

5. Churches put up buildings only because they do not know how not to. The real challenge is to discover new and more flexible forms of being the church of Jesus in the world of today and that is the opportunity being offered to us now.

For a Building:

1. A church building is a focal point in the community, a visible sign of God's presence in a way the school cannot be.
2. Our present accommodation is good but much needs to be fetched and carried for every service and mid-week use is very limited (although this could point to a better use of Sunday and the use of house groups for mid-week activities).
3. To depart too radically from the patterns people understand confuses them but does not attract them.
4. A church without a building would operate in pieces and would need good structures and leadership to keep it together.
5. You cannot have a baptistry in the school and this important act and witness would have to take place away from the area.

The church decided to go ahead and look at the possibility of a building. They received the following advice:

Site:

1. Visibility of the building is important. Can the site be seen from the main traffic arteries? How many people will normally pass by this site in the course of a week? Is there obvious accessibility?
2. Can we have one, and preferably two, entrances level with the ground outside for easy access by old people and wheel chairs?
3. Has the site good drainage? Is it at any time subject to flooding? It is good to be a little higher than other property around.
4. Has the site good and easy access for cars? Is it near good public transport? Is it near shops or other places where people are used to coming?

5. Room for a good car park is needed. Unless a public car park is nearby the Council will doubtless make parking room a condition of building.

6. Find out what any site is really worth and don't overpay for it.

The Building:

1. Build as flexibly as possible so that a small group is cosy and large numbers can be accommodated. (A building can have sliding walls to be able to quickly convert to one large area or a series of small rooms. Solid sliding panels are more soundproof.)

2. Build for others, not just for yourselves. Include a large kitchen and facilities for a coffee bar, bookshop, counselling room, prayer chapel and a room for toddlers (creche on Sundays and Mothers and Toddlers midweek). Include a large vestibule where mothers with noisy children can sit behind a thick glass panel and both see and hear everything.

3. If playgroups are to be contemplated find out how many toilets (and what kind of toilets) will be demanded by the authorities and build them in.

4. If finances are restricted build in stages. Always build with an eye to space and facility for further extension.

5. Look to buy two or three acres.

6. Don't let the architect plan a flat-roofed building. They leak!

7. Get an architect who understands well the purposes and mission of the church. Let all plans be subject to the mission and proclaim it. Have a look at other buildings the architect has planned and see how well he has used his skill.

8. Make sure your relationship and working with the architect is close. He is acting as the agent of the church and must understand what the church needs and why before he can create a design. Make clear your financial limits too.

9. Unless you are 100% sure of your builder, it will pay you in the long run to employ your own site foreman.

10. No formal or high pulpit is needed. A sectional platform with a table on it is more flexible. No pews. Consider chairs in a semi-circle. Have an open baptistry with an unbreak-

able glass cover.

11. Have a small but expert fabric committee to keep your property in very good order.

Finance:

1. Add 10% (in your own thinking) to the architect's estimate of cost and three to six months to the promised finishing date given by the builder.

2. Do not incur the kind of debt that commits the church for many years to money-raising rather than mission. Few recover from it.

When the Building is Complete:

1. Make a big fuss and a great celebration at the opening. It is a point of interest, contact and publicity. Make the most of it.

2. Besides physical visibility the building also needs community visibility. This is obtained when:

a) Good, plain notice boards are put in the right places or large and plain lettering right across the building, so that he who drives may read.

b) The community know and use the building regularly for other than worship. Keep control of your own building but let it be used for anything which you wish to encourage for the good of the community.

c) The church has a slogan ('the church that cares', 'the church for the family' or something else warm) which catches on (usually through the notice boards, adverts, magazine and much good publicity) in the area.

Added Note:

It is always worth thinking about the alternatives to a conventional building. The church at M bought a large warehouse, clad its walls and put in a false ceiling and ended with a large and useful church building at a much smaller cost than that of a brick building. A shop in the High Street which can be used as a coffee shop and bookshop, with a large room behind it that can be used for worship, is better still.

Editor's Comment:-

We would welcome any correspondence from readers who could add to this checklist other useful considerations.

Willow Creek - A New Philosophy of Ministry

by Justin Dennison

Willow Creek Community Church - The Church for the Unchurched

It is my belief that God raises up particular church leaders and churches to encourage the church to broaden its vision. For example, David Watson and St Michaels, Roger Forster and Ichthus, Terry Virgo and Coastlands, John Wimber and Vineyard, Paul Yonggi-Cho and Yoido, and so on. A new name is now emerging from across the Atlantic which will, I believe, have a profound effect on the thinking of many church leaders. This could potentially have a radical influence on the style and content of what many church leaders will want to do in their services.

The name of Bill Hybels and Willow Creek Community Church are household names across evangelical America. I first heard of his ministry over six years ago from a friend of mine who visited Chicago and I have attended seminars conducted by Bill Hybels and other pastors at WCCC. I have had opportunity to spend time with some of them discussing in greater depth their philosophy of ministry. Over the weeks I have been in Chicago I have also attended many of their Sunday and Mid-Week Services.

Classic Success Story

The story of Willow Creek began in 1975 when a young pastor fresh out of College started a youth church plant out of a traditional evangelical church. The church plant began in a rented cinema with a youth group of about one hundred. Bill Hybels is a 'charismatic' entrepreneur who had a burden to build a church for the unchurched. Numerically the church mushroomed almost immediately as many unchurched people were drawn to its services. It is the classic church success story. WCCC now occupies a 127 acre site, complete with lakes, in a state-of-the-art building which resembles a theatre more than a church building. The

auditorium seats 5,000 with high-tech audio, lighting and video equipment. It has a budget of nine million dollars a year. Its three week-end services attract a congregation of some 15,000 people, over half of whom are seekers and not yet believers.

Bill Hybels is consumed by the burden that 'lost people matter to God' and this has led him to pioneer what he calls Seeker Services on a Sunday. These services are unlike most evangelical church services - the music is highly contemporary led by a band of musicians on the

stage, there is drama, the messages are biblical but life-related rather than expository in nature, there are no traditional hymns or modern choruses sung, there is very little prayer and never communion. The reasoning being that Hybels is trying to construct a service

in which an unbeliever, or Seeker, would feel at home and so he deliberately avoids most of the trappings of a traditional church service. The Sunday services are aimed primarily at the non-Christian, not the Christian.

"Bill Hybels is consumed by the burden that 'lost people matter to God'."

Unmoved and Unsaved?

He maintains that too many unchurched people are put off God by the irrelevance and boredom of most church services. He points out that a non-Christian and Christian are fundamentally different. So even if you are able to persuade a non-Christian to attend a traditional church service, which is aimed at the Christian (the already convinced), you should not be surprised if the majority of non-Christians are left unmoved and so unsaved, and do not return. He maintains that although the packaging may be different at Willow Creek, the underlying message is unchanged, the only difference is that it is relevant and understandable to the unchurched.

There are two mid-week services, called New Community, which some 7,000 people

attend. These are geared primarily for Christians. So it is here that the Bible is preached expositively, songs are sung, prayers are said, communion is shared. In fact everything you would expect to find in a Sunday service takes place on a Wednesday or Thursday evening!

Bill Hybels comes from a mid-America traditional evangelical background. He does not promise to heal the sick, he is a non-charismatic, he is not a fiery preacher but speaks in a relaxed, thoughtful manner. The Sunday Seeker Services are produced with the professionalism of a television programme, yet he refuses to go on television because of the financial resources and fund raising that would be needed to keep them on the air. Offerings are taken at every service but visitors are expressly told not to give as they are guests.

A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep?

One of the criticisms levelled at Willow Creek is that it is 'a mile wide and an inch deep', meaning it attracts large numbers of superficial followers. However, in my experience, I have been most impressed with the diversity of groups and organisations who are training and discipling hundreds of people every week. Their process of assimilation and integration of church members is outstanding. It is the best I have come across anywhere and the course work they have written is now being marketed by Fuller Theological Seminary. Their commitment to discipleship and to enabling people to discover and use their God-given gifts would put many other churches to shame. This has been one of their strengths and keys to their phenomenal growth. Their Small Groups, with their emphasis on discipleship, have been described by one of their pastors as 'the invisible backbone of the church'.

The church has a **Seven-Step Philosophy** which aims to move the non-Christian (Unchurched Harry) to become a disciple of Jesus (Fully Devoted Follower). Put simply as 'we gather to edify, we scatter to evangelise'. It has seven key elements which are woven into the fabric of WCCC and into the thinking of its members:

1. Build relationships with Unchurched Harrys.

Bridges of friendships with non-Christians are

constantly encouraged.

2. Train members in verbal witness.

Everyone is trained to share their faith to influence their friends.

3. Seekers' Services.

Members can then bring their friends to a safe and relevant service.

4. Believers' Services.

The place where Christians can be fed and grow around the word and worship.

5. Small Groups.

The place where strategic discipleship takes place in groups of 5/6 people.

6. Spiritual Gifts.

The opportunity to discover a place of service and ministry within the church.

7. Financial Stewardship.

Regular teaching on tithing so that the ministry is not impaired.

Willow Creek is a church which has come into the spotlight in evangelical America. There are now aspiring clones springing up across the States. It has become, to some people, a model of how to become a successful church. But what can we learn here in Britain from them?

Firstly, we must not imitate them. This has often been the classic mistake of trying to transplant another successful church model lock, stock and barrel into our own backyard. God does not work that way. Bill Hybels is a uniquely gifted man. The suburb of Barrington is a unique location. Where in England could we find 127 acres of suburbia and build what we like?!

Secondly, we must learn from them. For far too long we have prided ourselves on our church growth, which in many areas is no more than the recycling of the saints, rather than reaching the sinners! We must look hard and critically at what we do in our services and ask 'What are we doing? Why are we doing it? Who are we trying to reach?'

Thirdly, we must apply filters to their church life. WCCC is geared to the Baby-Boomers/Yuppie generation of middle-class America. They have a clear target group which they are reaching extremely successfully. We need to recognize that there are certain cultural presuppositions which would not transfer across

the Atlantic.

Fourthly, we must apply their principles into our church life. How can we reach the unchurched in our area/communities? Are we expecting the unchurched, which constitute most of the population, to come into a service which for them is totally unfamiliar, perhaps threatening, irrelevant and not contemporary? I believe we need to look seriously at creating space to provide a regular Pre-Evangelism Seekers' Service into the life of our churches if we are to have a real impact on the unchurched in our communities.

Is this where Church Planting could make a unique impact? Instead of the Daughter Church being a replica of the Mother Church, perhaps it could be a Church for the Unchurched. Reaching out to the unreached in the community and drawing in others who would not come to the Mother Church.

Willow Creek's Pastors' Conferences have become life-changing events for many Christian leaders in America. I must confess that I have been greatly helped and inspired by my own contact with the leaders of WCCC and would strongly recommend their first UK conference in June 1992 in Birmingham. Willow Creek is not without its critics, but I believe that God has indeed raised up this church, I sense his hand on the leaders, they have much to teach us. We in Britain need to learn how to be churches that significantly reach the unreached. Our Church Growth must not simply be a question of filling churches with more Christians, but of genuinely increasing the Kingdom of God through conversion to Christ.

Justin Dennison is Senior Pastor at Altrincham Baptist Church, Cheshire.

FOR YOUR DIARY...

The first UK Conference of Willow Creek Community Church is on June 16th - 18th 1992 at the new Birmingham International Centre - more details with the next issue of Planting Papers — Ed.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

From: Derek Tidball

(B.U. Secretary for Mission and Evangelism)

Dear Editor,

The challenge has rightly been thrown down that the Baptist Union should set out a missionary strategy which includes goals for church planting in the coming decade. As a result of the listening days in which our new General Secretaries engaged it is hoped that a general plan for the next five years will be adopted by council next year. Part of that plan will include goal setting in mission.

Before such plans can be fine tuned, however, and before major conferences are held on church planting next year, it is essential that we know the present position more accurately than we do at the moment. Anecdotal evidence of church planting abounds. It is difficult to come by an overall picture.

We know that during the decade 1980-1989 36 churches joined the B.U. The picture of church planting is however much more complicated than that simple figure suggests. May I ask your readers to assist me in putting together a more thorough picture.

Please would they write to me listing churches they know which have been planted since 1980 in the following categories. Please give the names of the churches, to enable cross checking, and wherever possible the date of their coming into being.

1. Newly constituted churches in membership with B.U.
2. Newly constituted churches, baptistic in practice but not in membership with B.U.

3. Daughter churches, or newly planted congregations of an existing church, not registered as a separate church.
4. Newly constituted LEP's with a Baptist input.
5. Churches which have been 'resurrected'.
6. Other new churches which were spontaneous plants or splits from Baptist churches.
7. Churches planted in the period which have not survived.

I shall seek to check and augment this material with Superintendents and Association Secretaries but often the view from the ground is more thorough - so please write.

Already, in the week and a half I have been in my new post as Secretary for Mission and Evangelism, I have heard comments to the effect that nothing is happening among Baptists in terms of establishing new congregations. That is obviously untrue. But how untrue?

Please help.

Derek J. Tidball

BACUP Conference Review

by Peter Jackson

I attended the First Baptist Church Planters Conference, not as a practitioner, but as someone interested in, and committed to, the idea of church planting. With an impending move to a church that is presently about to plant congregations, I needed to absorb as much as I could of the theory and practice of church planting, and learn from the experience of others. The conference certainly helped in that respect.

It was good firstly to be in a large group of people with vast and varied experience of planting churches, and to have some time and opportunity to share together. The programme was sufficiently balanced to allow for this and I was able to feel comfortable in my comparative ignorance, yet openness to learn. I was glad this was not simply a conference for the experts.

I found overall the input sessions stimulating, challenging and confirming. It was good to hear Peter Wagner, fresh from the airport, expand on the four kinds of Church Growth, and to set the tone of the conference in his statement that **'the most effective evangelistic activity under heaven is planting churches.'** This was supported from a scriptural, theological, practical and financial point of view. The whole issue of the church relating to the culture of the day and the need for an awareness of the degrees of cultural differences to be bridged in effective witness or planting was aptly considered.

Peter Brierly informed and challenged us with more than statistics from the English Church Census, giving us a U.K./Baptist view. Here was reality to be faced, but the picture for the denomination was not dismal. True we have much to learn from the streams of the church that are growing, but recent trends give signs of hope. It was good to be challenged, but I personally found it hard to engage in meaningful discussion immediately in the group that followed. I had tried to absorb so much in the session I needed time to digest it a little.

I regularly find Roger Forster inspiring and stimulating, and this was no exception. Speaking from great and effective experience with Ichthus he 'raced' us through eight processes of planting churches as seen in Acts. Although I found his alliteration a bit contrived, m m m!?! , I was struck by the variety of possibilities that can emerge from the fundamental commitment to God's mission agenda, and an openness to his Spirit. The overall title to the first day was 'Hearing the Spirit' and we had certainly been doing that.

Hearing needs response, and so the second half of the conference attempted to deal with responses to the Spirit, past, present and future. Stuart Christine aptly led the session on past responses, reflecting on church planting strategy guidelines from Acts. I found his analysis a useful balance to the previous session and

valued the insight into the character of the church and the character of the world, both of which need to be considered in any strategy. It was also interesting to note the change in Acts from reactive, spontaneous evangelism/mission to programmed and reflective action. I jotted down the comment from George Carey: 'I actually believe that church planting is taking us back to the proper theology of evangelism in the New Testament.'

The choice of seminars looking at present responses was reasonably varied and comprehensive. I had little difficulty choosing three and found two of those helpful. These were practical and detailed, giving insight into 'how to do it', with adequate opportunity for comment and question. It was useful to hear first hand experience of church planting, to be given some guidelines and to become aware of some difficulties, dangers and effects both positive and negative. I appreciated the honest reality of the leaders of these sessions.

Perhaps the weakness of the conference, for me, was its ending. I am not sure how much more conclusive it could have been, and I appreciate the attempts to look to future responses (some of which I found helpful), but a personal reflection is that it 'petered out'. This was unfortunate because in other respects it had been a rewarding time.

Set in a good atmosphere of worship, with

Spurgeon's College Leadership Weekend Church Planting

6.30 pm Friday 10th - 5.00 pm Saturday
January 11th 1992

"The way to establish new communities of faith."

**Speakers: Stephen Ibbotson
Geoffrey Reynolds**

Cost (including meals)

Residential £40

Non-residential £30

controlled and sensitive leadership there was varied and balanced input, times of discussion and reflection and an adequate resource of material for further study. As a *First Baptist Church Planters Conference* it was good, and I would recommend attendance at any subsequent ones.

Peter Jackson is a member of the Pastoral Team at Millmead Baptist Church, Guildford.

Tape Order Form - July Conference



'What the Spirit is saying to the churches'

Sessions	Quantity
1. A Time to Plant - C. Peter Wagner	
2. The Message of the Census - Peter Brierley	
3. Learning from Others - Roger Forster	
4. Past Responses - Stuart Christine	
5. Future Responses Forum	
6. Plenary Session Seminars:	
A. Rural Church Planting - Licence	
B. Surveying for Planting - Christine	
C. Missioners in Planting - Potter/Davison	
D. Associational Policy - Reynolds/McBain	
E. Answering Objections - Nodding	
F. Effects on the Mother Church - Ibbotson	
G. Mother/Daughter Relationships - Archer	
H. Case Study - Isle of Dogs - Hill	

Name: Total Qty.
 Address: Total cost
 at £2.50
 each

Phone:

Please send with payment (cheques to R. Almond) to BACUP Tapes, 353 Long Lane, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 5JQ Phone: 081 304 5760. Postage and packing included.

BOOK REVIEWS:

Ready, Steady, Grow by David Holloway

(Published by Kingsway £5.99)

Here is a book that aims at popularising the principles of Church growth to make them understandable and relevant to the U.K. scene.

David Holloway is Vicar of Jesmond in Newcastle, and some of what he writes is obviously more relevant to the Anglican background, but taking that on board you will find this an enjoyable read.

The writing is well illustrated from wide personal experience, both from the growing church scene around the world, and from church history, and the chapter on Modes and Shapes contains helpful insights to the spread of the faith across the U.K. in an earlier age.

The work is well based on Scripture, with a couple of chapters devoted to opening up both the teaching of Jesus and the subsequent New Testament letters on the need for growth.

There is one chapter on Church Planting explaining why, even from an Anglican viewpoint, planting congregations is profitable for the church and its mission.

Well worth the read for those who want to discover Church Growth Principles or to earth such in the U.K. setting.

Reviewer: Graham Licence

Creating Communities of the Kingdom by David Shenk and Ervin Stutzman

(Published by Herald Press)

'In recent years, a new surge of interest in church planting has been rising around the Christian world. Many excellent books on the subject have appeared. But *Creating Communities of the Kingdom* stands head and shoulders above the rest in its depth and integrity. It is a stimulating and inspiring challenge to biblical discipleship' - C. Peter Wagner.

It is a modern book with 2,000 year old roots. The authors constantly look back to the New Testament for models of church planting. They then look forward and wrestle with the timeless challenge of applying the basic scrip-

tural principles and insights to a modern people. Anyone concerned with evangelising today's world will be instructed and inspired by the tapestry of Scripture and 20th Century examples that Shenk and Stutzman weave into their book.

Each chapter ends with excellent guides for group study, making this book a very practical help for both churches and Christians that want to put the key New Testament church planting principles into practice. Very highly recommended.

Reviewer: Editor

“From the BAC-Room”

A Word from the Editors

- * BACUP is pleased to announce the 1992 BACUP Conference details. We shall be joining with the Baptist World Alliance on March 23rd-26th at Swanwick in Derbyshire (see page 13 for more details).
- * BACUP would welcome all correspondence concerning anything that appears in Planting Papers. Or maybe you would like to contribute an article on an aspect of church planting previously uncovered.

- * Planting Papers will gladly publicise your church planting related event at minimal cost if you inform us of all the details at least four months before the event.
- * A reminder to ALL 1991 BACUP SUBSCRIBERS that your 1992 subscription is now due (£5; £3 students). [See the insert sheet for a special offer on prompt renewals.]

Write to: The Editors, BACUP Planting Papers, Spurgeon's College, 189 South Norwood Hill, London SE25 6DJ.

BACUP is able to announce that for 1992, in conjunction with the BU Mission Department, we are involved in the planning of B.I.C.E.C.:

BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE for ESTABLISHING CHURCHES

March 23rd-26th 1992 at Swanwick, Derbyshire

This gathering, sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance is likely to be one of the most significant in the area of church planting that UK Baptists are likely to have the chance to participate in during the Decade of Evangelism.

Speakers will be drawn from the Baptist community worldwide and attendance is being sought from delegates from across East and West Europe.

Cost:-

Registration Fee - £40 (£60 per couple)

Accommodation and meals - £76 per person

**For more information, contact Derek Tidball, Secretary of Evangelism, Baptist House,
129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxon.**

Church Planting Study Groups

An encouraging number of our subscribers have indicated that they would like the chance to get involved in following through particular aspects of church planting ministry by joining or forming specific study groups.

I've listed a range of possible subject areas, some of which individuals have already shown an interest in forming a group to investigate more fully.

Training for 'lay' church planters

Statistical survey of Baptist/other planting

Supervision of church planting teams

Theology of church planting

Cross-cultural church planting

Ecumenical church planting

Church planting and finance

Rural church planting

Models of church planting

Associational strategies for new church planting

Church planting lessons from abroad

Inner city planting

Bivocational leadership and church planting

PLEASE UNDERLINE any area that you would like to study with others, and return with the slip below.

If you have another area PLEASE NOTE HERE

We will put you in touch with others of like mind to work out how best to proceed.

1992 SUBSCRIBERS

BACUP, c/o Spurgeon's College, 189 South Norwood Hill, London SE25 6DJ

Name (Block letters)

Address (Block letters)

Post Code

Church Telephone no.

☐ I wish to subscribe to BACUP and enclose £_____ as annual subscription (£5; £3 student)