

SPECTRUM as a movement is organized through a Co-ordinating Group. The members of the group are elected annually at the AGM, which is held during the SPECTRUM annual conference in May.

At the AGM held in May 2008, the following officers were elected.

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**World Church Invitations:**

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**Ordinands/Publicity/E-group**

**Secretary:** Rev'd Alex Conn

**Website master:** Mr Ian Bosman

**Irish Representative:** Rev'd Derek Poole

**Print Production:** Rev'd Rob Anning

**Additional Members:** Rev'd Gerry Wilson, Rev'd Sue Lambert, Mrs Jo Newell Mrs Hilary Wilson.

If you have any questions, suggestions or contributions to make to SPECTRUM, then it would be appreciated if you will direct your message to the appropriate officer. Any articles for the *Engage* magazine are appreciated and should be sent, preferably by e-mail, to The Editor.

# Welcome to the first edition of Engage magazine

**SUMMER 2008**

**Issue: 1**

**INSIDE:**

*Explore — the study paper for 2008/2009 on the theme: Changing Church for a Changing World — pull out in the centre*

*What do teenagers really think about worship? — pages 6 and 7*

*Book Reviews — starting page 9*

*Meditation: Light and Darkness — page 8*

Dear Readers

We would like to introduce ourselves, as your new joint co-ordinators of *Spectrum*. Our names are Derek Poole and Deborah (known as Debbie) Godefroy and we are both Methodist ministers. We have been a part of *Spectrum*, formerly known as Fellowship of the Kingdom, and attended the annual conference for about eight years. We have also served on the committee, now known as the Co-ordinating Group for the last four years.

Derek is now retired and lives in the Republic of Ireland, although still offers his gifts and talents to the local Church and Circuit. Debbie has pastoral charge of two Methodist Churches in Bristol and is the Methodist Chaplain in a multi-faith chaplaincy at the University of Bristol.

Following the launch of *Spectrum* in May of this year, we hope to encourage growth and to expand the membership and groups over a wide network. With new material, including a CD-Rom with information on how to join and set up groups, we anticipate an increase in the workload for the leadership. Therefore we have decided to share the role and use our different gifts, alongside those of the Co-ordinating

Group to develop team ministry.

Another way of putting it, of course, is to say that it takes two of us to replace Phil Mason!! Phil has done so much to lead FK over the last nine years as our Chairman and even more work in the setting up and launch of SPECTRUM. We said thank you to Phil at the annual conference at Willersley Castle but we would wish to record our thanks to him on behalf of the whole *Spectrum* movement, in other words — you!

We look forward to our first year with excitement and anticipation and hope that we may serve you all to the best of our ability.

*Derek and Debbie*

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## Letter from the Treasurer

Dear Members of *Spectrum*,  
Thank you to all members who have sent good wishes to me over the years when they have sent their subscription cheques. It is important that from now on cheques are made payable to "Spectrum". We have arranged the name change at the bank, but the account number is unchanged and the account is at the same branch of HSBC.

Members with bankers orders should have the payee name changed to "Spectrum" and I ask you to contact your branch to arrange this as soon as possible. If you are unable to do this the standing order should still come through to our account as the sort code and account number are unchanged. Most of the bankers order subscriptions come through in early September.

Some of you remember me from the years 1980 -1988 when I worked at the Property Division and Trustees for Methodist Church

Purposes in Manchester. I was involved with finance there and had some interesting experiences, particularly at board meetings.

This year's FK conference was particularly interesting for me as I had already met Andrew Roberts when he visited my church, Leintwardine, to talk about "cafe church" and fresh expressions.

Ours is a newish circuit (Marches) which stretches from Pontesbury near Shrewsbury to Builth Wells in rural mid Wales. It could be that some members have served in this area. I assist Rev Michael Langstaff at Leintwardine with pastoral and community work.

Next year I hand over as treasurer of *Spectrum* to Hilary Wilson and I am sure that she will enjoy doing it as much as I have.

Good wishes,

*George Linaker*

all this, there is much food for thought in this readable story.

*Brian Baker*

### "Why Spirituality is difficult for Westerners"

by David Hay,  
Societas, £8.95, 2007,  
ISBN 9871845400484

David Hay, a zoologist and senior research fellow at Aberdeen University, develops the hypothesis in this book that religious or spiritual awareness is biologically natural to the human species and has emerged in evolution for its survival value.

The default position in western society that Hay argues against is that people are born atheists and become religious through socialisation and culture. Building on the work of Alistair Hardy, whose study of Religious Experience at Oxford University is well known, he argues that the primordial basis for both religion and ethics is 'relational consciousness'.

Relational consciousness is the altered state of awareness that is more intense than normal and is allied to a sense of being in relationship with others, the environment, to God and includes greater awareness of self. This definition works for both theistic (eg Christian) and atheistic religions (eg Buddhism). People are born with a transcendental awareness that they learn to interpret through their local religious culture but in the social construct of modern western society people learn to blot it out and become secular atheists.

This social construct is traced by Hay to Max Stirner and others in 19th century Germany including Marx, Engels and Feuerbach. He also shows how individualism grew in western society from the sixteenth century and the defence of religion was given over to philosophy. The cult of individualism where relational consciousness is lost leads to the totalitarianism and authoritarianism of both the left and the right. In the last section of the book he looks at evidence from brain scans using CT and MRI technology to show that spirituality can be seen as a biological, empirical phenomenon.

This is a short book that packs in it many ideas and an analysis that helped me understand why for example Dawkins' "God Delusion" has become a bestseller. I now see how the meta-narrative of western society has become secularism and how the portrayal of religion as a virus affecting the human species has grown out of centuries of the development of ideas. In highly recommending this book I quote from the introduction:

'There is more to my argument than an attempt to get at the scientific truth underlying our spiritual awareness, for I believe that many of our most pressing social and political problems — meaninglessness, the collapse of a sense of human community, the draining away of trust and social capital in general, the turning of everything into commodity, and carelessness about the ecology of our planet — have their origin in ignoring the aspect of our human nature adapted to deal with them, relational consciousness or spirituality.' (p.3). *John Butterfield*

worship as the occasion of proclaiming the Gospel and witnessing to its saving power (p339).

Disappointingly, Chapman stops short of offering his own analysis of a contemporary Methodist understanding of worship. He also fails to make any reference to any of the important contemporary influences upon British Methodist worship, such as from the World Church, the *Fresh Expressions* initiative, new movements in music and hymnody, drama and the visual.

The merit of Chapman's book is that it brings together, in one place, the story of the development and expression of Methodist worship. It introduces the reader to the important landmarks of that development and whets the appetite to delve further. All-in-all this is a book worth buying and reading.

*Adrian Burden*

**The Miracle of Jesus,**  
*by Robert Brunger,*  
Church in the Market Place  
Publications; £9.99

Inspired by discussions within a group of like minded people who met regularly to reflect on a wide range of topics, Robert Brunger felt committed to give further serious thought about the lack of miraculous happenings in today's world, a topic which emerged in their deliberations. Inevitably this led to an in depth analysis of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. The result of his thinking and research is "The Miracle of Jesus".

A cursory reading of the title can give the wrong impression. The book is much more than an analysis of the miracles as

recorded in the gospels. The writer unashamedly and with great ingenuity provides natural explanations for the miracles but central to his arguments is the recognition that even with this stance, the happenings only occur through the charismatic personality of Jesus. Jesus is the miracle worker but uses natural causes to achieve his results.

The reviewer was introduced to several ingenious explanations not met before. A central feature of the writer's framework is the conclusion from his study of the gospel records that the ministry of Jesus was very carefully planned with meticulous attention to minute details, probably revealed at its clearest in the events leading to the crucifixion. This, the writer argues, was because Jesus used an already existing religious community with powerful tentacles reaching into the fabric of Jewish life as the basis of his planning even extending to the provision of accommodation and boltholes during his wanderings.

The book is written in the form of a story told by a boy who is serving a probationary period on joining the community. He finds himself very much at the heart of the ministry of Jesus as Jesus uses the community for his ministry and the boy ends up playing an important role during the last days of the earthly life of Jesus.

The theses of the book will jar with many. There is no emphasis on the divinity of Jesus although he is very clearly the Messiah of the Old Testament. The 'Father' to whom Jesus refers is usually the leader of the earthly community to which he belongs. Despite

# Members — It's over to you!

*Spectrum*  
*General Secretary,*  
*Richard Firth,*  
*writes:*

This year's annual SPECTRUM Conference ran with the theme which currently pervades every aspect of the Methodist Church's life, that is "Fresh Expressions", or new ways of being the Church in today's world.

Your former FK Committee was convinced that our movement could not be exempt from this process, bearing in mind that membership, over many years, had seen an almost imperceptible, yet real, reduction in numbers.

Accordingly the Committee came to believe, after long deliberation, that the movement should be rebranded and re-launched. This was not an easy conclusion to reach and involved much soul searching and asking of pertinent questions.

We were convinced that everything of value in the *Fellowship of the Kingdom* should continue in the future and we would emphasise that this will be the case: worthwhile fellowship in groups, a stimulating

annual conference, a magazine which is a significant forum for discussion, and a website and an e-group for those who wish to participate, together with pastoral caring.

The content of the FK ethos was of real value but we were not recruiting in any significant numbers. So a graphic designer was asked to look at our image and provide us with one which would speak to the 21st century. The Committee, after long and hard and prayerful deliberation, and sifting through over forty possible names, were guided, we believe, into choosing the name SPECTRUM.

The idea was to promote a movement which would be inclusive of ministers and lay people, women and men, and any denomination or theological opinion. The name SPECTRUM itself speaks of such an inclusiveness which we believe is something that today's Church needs.

So the 'new' movement was launched after two meetings of the AGM had agreed to and supported the proposals of the Committee.

There is an abundance of publicity material available to help in the re-launch process.

SO, MEMBERS, IT'S OVER TO YOU!! — to think of imaginative ways to recruit new members and to increase the numbers of those who belong to the movement. We would welcome stories of good practice if anyone cares to send them in to the editor. Meetings may be held at any time, in any place and all are welcome. It's up to you to do the inviting and provide the hospitality.

In so far as the Committee is concerned, it will now be called the Co-ordinating Group and it will attempt to work in a more collaborative fashion, details still to be thrashed out!!

But we will need to recruit more talent. During the next few years we shall need a new magazine editor, groups secretary and membership secretary and new members to the group itself as representatives retire each year.

If anyone could volunteer to serve we would be glad to have names or indeed suggestions of people with particular talents who would make a valuable contribution, even if, at present, they are not members.

The future of SPECTRUM is in the hands of each and every member, so please do your bit to ensure that the movement continues and indeed grows, because new people cannot be included unless first of all they are invited!

*Editor's note: A flyer about Spectrum is included with this edition — please use it for recruiting new members and making our movement more widely known. If you need any further publicity material, such as leaflets, cards or PowerPoint presentation on CD, please contact any member of the Co-ordinating Committee. Their addresses are on the back of the magazine.*

## In Memorium

The following members have died since the last issue of the magazine was published:

David S. Hinson  
J. Bryan Ewin  
Eileen Sloley  
David Walmsley  
Keith Bounds  
Michael Foster

Please notify our Pastoral Secretary, Roy Newell, of the deaths of any of our members, or of any cases where a letter to a member on behalf of *Spectrum* might be appreciated.

## Book Reviews

### **Born In Song: Methodist Worship in Britain**

by David M Chapman,  
Church in the Market Place Publications,  
2006, PB 355 + x pp £9.95. ISBN 978-1-  
899147-56-4

David Chapman is better known for his work on Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue than as a liturgical scholar. Nevertheless, he has produced a readable volume, which rehearses the story of the development of the many facets of Methodist worship at a time when many of the standard texts are out of print and unavailable. Whether Chapman delivers on his promise to shed 'fresh light on the most challenging issues facing Methodist worship in the first decade of the 21st Century' is debatable. There is little new material in this book which is, largely, descriptive and Chapman offers little distinctive analysis of the developments he describes.

The thirteen chapters of this volume contain all that you would expect of a book on Methodist worship. The opening substantive chapter rehearses the Prayer Book tradition in our heritage, with all the accepted material about Puritan influences upon Wesley's abridgment, debate between 'ritualistic' and 'extempore' worship patterns, and the parallel developments of nineteenth century Methodist churches. Today's *Methodist Worship Book* is subject to a very brief commentary, over three short

paragraphs, which outlines some of the 'new' material. Chapman is unhelpful in his likening of Extended Communion to a form of reserved sacrament at this point – the two are not actually the same thing at all (p34). Subsequent chapters deal with the Preaching Service, initiation, Lovefeasts and Watchnights, the Covenant Service, marriage, funerals, ordinations, Morning Prayer, the various commissioning services, hymnody/music and the setting of worship.

In his conclusion, Chapman rightly observes, using the work of David Hempton, the 'dialectical tensions' under which Methodist worship has developed (p334). Clearly such tensions include the relationship between written forms and extemporary forms of worship and Chapman suggests that Methodism has, over the years, oscillated between the two (p335). He suggests other tensions, between the emotion and the intellect, between *sacramental* and *subjective* (his *italics* p336). Chapman suggests that it is these tensions that 'give Methodist worship its distinctive shape' and which 'make it difficult to predict how Methodist worship will develop in the years ahead' (p337).

The last three pages of Chapman's conclusion, and of the book, are given to a brief introduction of some themes towards the construction of a theology of Methodist worship (p338-40). He reminds us of a Methodist understanding of worship as divine service (p338), the arena in which individuals encounter the living and holy God (p338) and the place of fellowship (p339). He suggests that Methodists have, historically and primarily, identified

# A Litany of Light and Darkness

by Richard Firth  
based on  
*Psalm 139 v12*

The light and the darkness praise  
you, our God;  
**They are both alike to you.**

In the light we see clearly to do what  
we are given to do each day;  
**In the darkness we find rest for  
tired bodies and minds.**

In the light we may discern and meet  
the needs of others;  
**In the darkness we may recover  
from our efforts.**

In the light we may be in awe of  
earth's beauty and the wonder of  
life;  
**In the darkness we may be  
spellbound by the vastness of  
the universe.**

The daylight helps us into new  
spheres of discovery;  
**In the night-time silence we may  
discover more about ourselves.**

The daytime demands that we be  
alert and aware;

**Night-time enables our faculties to  
be refreshed.**

The day gives opportunity for action,  
learning and service;  
**The night brings the sleep that  
revives our being.**

The new day arrives with the rising of  
the sun;  
**The radiant moon lends  
reassurance to the night.**

The morning brings hope,  
expectation and opportunity;  
**The evening, the chance to be  
penitent and find mercy.**

**Help us, caring God, to accept  
Your gifts of light and darkness  
and to discern your presence  
within them.**

**Your separation of the darkness  
and the light  
reveals your wisdom  
as focused in Jesus Christ,  
the Light of the world.  
Help us always to follow Him,  
that light which no darkness  
can ever extinguish,  
for His name's sake.**

**Amen.**

# SPECTRUM CONFERENCE 2009

## ***LIVING TOGETHER: Christians and Muslims***

**Monday, 11 to Thursday, 14 May**

***Willersley Castle, Derbyshire***

*Come and enjoy fellowship and learning in beautiful surroundings,  
including good food, en-suite facilities and swimming pool.*

*Speakers:*

**Dr Philip Lewis & Dilwar Hussain**

*Dr Philip Lewis is Bradford Interfaith Adviser and lecturer in peace studies at Bradford University.*

*He recently published the book: *Young, British and Muslim*.*

*Dilwar Hussain is a lecturer at the Islamic Institute in Leicester.*

**COST: £170 per person**

**(If booked by 31 January 2009, £175 after 31 January 2009)**

**(Non-en-suite by arrangement with the Conference Secretary)**

**(Cheques should be made payable to "Spectrum")**

**To make a booking, please contact Mrs Susan Towndrow  
34 Errington Road, Walton, Chesterfield, S40 3EP  
or for further information, telephone 01246 279737**

# What teenagers really think about worship . . .

The following question was asked at Worship committee: Why don't the young people ever stay in for the whole service?

The leader who works with the small group of 15 – 17 year olds asked them, believing that the best people to answer that question are the young people themselves. This article is a summary of their response

The first response, and this was unanimous, was because staying in services was *'so boring'* but digging deeper into what made it boring responses included:

- That often readings were in old version or said in language you did not understand – there was a recognition though that if you modernize everything that can sound *'too cheesy'*.
- Services are very repetitive.
- That the hymns often used language that the young people did not like or have any relation to. They recognized that some people in the

church liked those old hymns *'some people like old stuff'*.

- They also felt in church they were talked at not talked to. 'The preachers say what they believe and sometimes we do not agree but you can not say anything'.
- Services are predictable: 'You can usually see what is coming'
- Sometimes the minister asks for your suggestions but often they are not really listening, they just want you to say the answers they have already prepared so you wonder why they ask.

As to all age worship that did not really get a big thumbs up either they *'are normally not all that interesting'* and they wondered whether it met anyone needs.

Asked to define a good service this is what they said:

- A leader that is enthusiastic but not over the top.
- Not repetitive.
- Celebrates.

- Someone who uses reference points that they can understand.
- Someone who brings interesting things in to talk about but the way they talk about them is more important than the objects themselves.
- Someone who recognizes that people come to church for different reasons: some to worship God, some to learn and some just to see their friends.

Further discussion points were:

- If you got a good format you could not just keep repeating that because then it would get boring.
- People who came to church all wanted different things from a church service.
- Were we an audience or a congregation?
- An old suggestion put forward years ago but not implemented for an all age worship with the whole congregation doing different things:
  - An activity group
  - A discussion group
  - A listening group

They thought this would involve a lot of work and they thought it a good idea but did not think other church members would join in the activity or discussion groups.

Their Junior church time was seen as important because 'we can discuss stuff and say what we want'. They saw it as a place to explore ideas . 'I am quite sceptical'. 'At my age I am still deciding'. They thought that their ideas were very different from lots of the congregation.

## What can we learn from this exercise?

I think the young people concerned gave a very thoughtful and honest response to the question. I think we have a responsibility to listen to it and take it seriously. I think they showed in their responses a tolerance and understanding of others that is beyond their years. I am unsure as to whether we accommodate them in the same way they accommodate us and it does require us to think carefully about our services.

Interestingly they made no reference to 'power point' presentations and the use of technology in worship but answered the questions on a more profound level.

*(This article was written by Lois Cameron, one of the leaders of the young people's group at Stirling Methodist Church for that church's worship committee and is published here with their permission).*