

*This paper is a written summary of Paul's 'Vision & Budget' address to the Church Family on 25 January 2009. The Church Council have identified the 3 key areas on which we believe the Lord wants us to focus over the coming year, and it is my prayer that you will embrace this vision with your excitement, prayer, practical involvement, and, of course, financial support. A further report on our progress will be issued in September.*

## **1 Pastoral Provision**

Roberto hopes to begin a phased return to work next month, but, because he will, of course, have to pace himself very carefully, Ray, Jill, Chris & Pat will continue to share the load of pastoral care up to the summer. Roberto & Suzanne still sense the Lord is calling them to return to Spain in order to introduce 'Word & Spirit' ministry to the church there at some stage later this year, hopefully in the early autumn. A major task for the Church Council is to discern the Lord's will for how we replace both his post and that pioneered by Anna Wynn.

## **2 Church Planting & Partnership with other 'Transform' churches**

You will know that we have sensed the Lord calling us to be open-handed with the blessings we have been given – generosity is such a hallmark of God's nature, and we believe he wants us to be similarly generous. Almost 3 years ago, we sent out 30 people to help our former curate, Matthew Street, plant an entirely new worshipping community in Peasedown-St-John (PSJ). Since then, we have been actively seeking the Lord for further opportunities to plant; and, just like London buses, 3 have come along all at once ...

**Foxhill** – this year will see the culmination of the 'Rainbow Project'; the Church Council has recently approved expenditure of just under £300,000 for the complete refurbishment of the Church Rooms, with work scheduled to start in late March. By September, the Rooms will provide accommodation for all our staff (enabling them to work together, and saving us the cost of renting our present offices); and, of course, extra space for our children and young people, as well as community groups, both on Sundays and mid-week. Early next month, we expect to receive planning consent for the new St Andrew's Community Church on Foxhill; building will commence as soon as possible after that. Catherine Vaughan & the Foxhill Ministry Team are working on a Mission Strategy Document for the March meeting of the Church Council, after which we will publish details of the new worshipping community/ies we will be planting in our new building. We are also actively seeking partnerships with other 'Transform' churches to resource these communities. (We expect to hold a final Gift Day for the Rainbow Project before Easter – more details to follow).

**Widcombe** – for some time, we have been in conversation with our neighbouring parish, Widcombe (as well as the Diocese and other City churches) about the possibility of planting a congregation into St Matthew's – a large church at the bottom of Widcombe Hill. The leadership of the parish of Widcombe has now invited us to prepare for this new venture, with the backing of our local Deanery (the Anglican churches in Bath). A policy document is shortly to be considered by all parties, and a final decision will be given at a Deanery meeting on Monday 16 March. Please pray that all goes smoothly ahead.

The Church Council is proposing that, after Easter, our Sunday Evening Worship will move to St Matthew's, where it will, in particular, be more accessible to our students and others. This plant will be led by a team headed up by Tim Buckley, and, although he will continue to oversee worship and youth ministries at **htcd**, we are employing 2 new members of staff in order to support both him & Catherine for these exciting new ventures –

- **Joel Sales** comes to us from South Africa (where he was Worship Leader at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Cape Town) with his wife Cathie, and will act as worship co-ordinator for **htcd** and our first mission plant at PSJ. Joel begins work early next month
- **Chris Whitwell** comes to us from Canterbury with his wife Helena (nee Bradby) and will be our new full-time youth worker, both here at **htcd** and also on Foxhill and in local schools. He begins work after Easter

**Filling Station** – since 2006, the first 'Filling Station', in Box, has been providing Christians from a wide area and many different church backgrounds with an opportunity to experience 'Word & Spirit' theology and practice. With Joel's appointment, we have the opportunity to partner with other 'Transform' churches (notably PSJ and Bath City Church) in establishing further 'Filling Stations', both inside and outside the City – more details will follow later this year

## **3 Maturing the Church Family in Discipleship, Ministry & Leadership**

We believe that every church exists to continue and fulfil the ministry of Jesus (John 17. 18). We long to proclaim the kingdom he proclaimed, to do the things he did, to see the things he saw. We believe that only by holding 'Word' and 'Spirit' together can we hope to become a church family shaped by his character, and infused by his power, which sees the lost found, the sick healed, and the oppressed set free (1 Cor 4. 20).

This year, we will ask the Lord to show us exactly how we are to train, equip, enable and release all our members – children, youth and adults – to minister to others in the power and authority of Jesus.

On Saturday 7 March, the Church Council and Staff will spend the day in discussion and prayer, beginning the process of seeking the Lord's guidance for the practical ways in which these aims will be achieved.