

9th—11th February	WEBA Ministers' Conference at Sidholme
24th February 7:30pm	Imagine at Counterslip
25th February 7:30pm	Imagine at Bethesda Trowbridge
9th March 7:30pm	Imagine at Salem
10th March 7:30pm	Imagine at Gorse Hill
11th March 7:30pm	Imagine at Patchway
20th March 10am—3pm	A Day with the President at Stapleton Baptist Church
31st March 7pm	'Encouraging Women in Leadership' meal at Bristol Baptist College
28th June	WEBA 3 in 1 Event, venue to be confirmed

- Is your church 'fit 4 purpose?' Ask Regional Minister Alisdair Longwill about our new initiative to help churches move forward in mission.



- Please pray for ministers as they meet at **Sidholme**, and for Kingsley Appiagyei, BUGB President Elect, who will be speaking there.



- This year's BUGB President **John Weaver** will be speaking at Stapleton Baptist Church on Friday 20th March. This daytime event includes lunch and is open to all—please contact the WEBA office to book your place.



- Apologies for the postponement of this year's **Treasurers' Day**, which due to unforeseen circumstances will be held later in the year.

West of England Baptist Association
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West of England Baptist Association February 2009

- Home Mission Giving
- WEBA New Churches Fund
- New website launch
- Association Diary

What's this new logo all about? It's where we are in England, but it's also a church - independent, but supported, with plenty of space to grow...



More than 50 guests attended the 'Women in Leadership' meal held in November 2008: the next event is planned for the 31st March 2009

Home Mission giving: We've done it!

We owe another big thank you to all the churches who gave extra to Home Mission in response to our appeals before Christmas. You will remember that we were concerned about reaching our regional target of **£240,000** after falling far short of it in 2007. The good news is, we have exceeded the target with a final total of **£246,774!** This represents an increase of 11%. Nationally, Home Mission giving amounted to £3.85 million, 4% more than last

year. We are more than grateful for the faith and generosity shown by WEBA churches despite a very uncertain financial climate nationally.

Where would you go?

- To send a mother's day card when you've missed the last post?
- To find a good home for 200 copies of Mission Praise?
- To start a playgroup without re-inventing the wheel?

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Adventures in Mission: weba New Churches Fund



"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we believe that if God is calling us to share our faith it's about being where people are and meeting people where they're at"- in our neighbourhood.

Alison Boulton, a fourth year Ministry student at Bristol Baptist College, is talking to WEBA Regional Minister Alisdair Longwill about her future plans. WEBA is planning to help the Boulton family purchase a house on a new housing development at **Wichelstowe**, just south of Swindon. This will be the first project to come under the new umbrella of the **'WEBA New Churches Fund'**, the WEBA team's response to a growing awareness that we will need to plant several new churches in the region over the next few years.

The seed for this project was sown back in January 2008, when a group of ministers were praying for this proposed housing development. Ali, then a third year student, not yet entering the settlement process, says "I had one of those moments, when I just felt that God was saying we should be involved with this." A period of prayer, searching, and testing followed, and the calling was affirmed at every stage. From the start, a recurring prayer was that the new development would have 'a Christian presence from day one' – and it now seems that the Boultons will indeed

be one of the very first families to move in.

This is, however, a departure from the familiar church planting model. When Ali's friends say they're looking forward to coming and visiting the new church, her response is "that's great...but we don't know if there will necessarily be something for people to come to". Rather than set up formal meetings, the plan is for Ali and others to be at the heart of the community – serving as a school governor, joining an allotment club, running a parenting class or working with the local council to build community – and see what develops as relationships grow and questions begin to be asked. Rather than call this a 'church' or even a 'project', Alisdair has described this as an 'adventure' – because that's what it is.

It's an adventure that will rely on prayer – but one which also needs funding. During 2009, money raised under the 'New Churches Fund' will make the Wichelstowe 'adventure' happen. You can help the project get off the ground right now by sending cheques payable to **'WEBA'** and clearly marked **'New Churches Fund'** to the WEBA office.

Look out for Alison and Alisdair chatting on video on the new WEBA website! Ali will also feature on the new BUGB DVD later this year.

Where would you go?

(continued from page 1)

The new WEBA website will now be launched on the 1st March 2009. It's designed to act as a hub where all kinds of people within our churches can access what they need to get on with mission.

From the 1st March, click on www.webassoc.org.uk and you can:

- **Send** your mum a free exclusive e-card for mother's day!
- **List** 'wanted' and 'offered' church related items on WEBA's answer to freecycle, WECYCLE.
- **Find** out how another church tackled a specific project, such as starting a playgroup or hosting a healthy living fair.
- **Answer** some of those tricky-questions about Baptist life which you've never dared ask! (What is a trust company?)
- **Buy** church publicity, stationery, and, we hope, Christian books, with some of the profit going towards our New Churches Fund.
- **Source** fair trade goods for church and home
- **Check** what's happening in WEBA churches and around the region.

As usual, the fortnightly **WEBA email update** will prompt you to look at new items on the site, and provide a regular opportunity to connect with the other WEBA churches. Anyone in a WEBA church can be on this mailing list—if you don't yet receive the updates, just send an email with 'new WEBA update contact' in the subject line to ruth.whiter@webassoc.org.uk