



# February 2009

## The Economy

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**Prayer Breakfast**  
Saturday 7th February  
2009  
**Venue:** Abbeyfield  
Community Church,  
Abbeygate Street  
**Time:** 8.30 am - 10 am

**I leave the place of  
worship to begin my  
work.**  
**I enter my week to  
discover You before  
me.**  
**I enter my workplace  
to discover You there.**  
**I rejoice at having  
found You.**  
**Amen**

In January Seeking God's Blessing for Colchester (SGBfC) met together to pray and consider our response to the current economic situation.

### Please pray for:

- The retail sector, including shops, cafés and restaurants, and estate agents and garages.
- God's shaping of our culture, that our society would please Him in its values and priorities.
- Those working in the banking industry.
- Those who are already vulnerable, the homeless, those living on benefits, and those worried about feeding their children.
- All those facing uncertainty in their jobs and those already made redundant.
- Employers who have to make difficult decisions about their staff.
- The media.
- The Government, those involved in forming policy and those working in the Treasury.
- That we would be characterised by generosity and not live in fear of want.

### Increased work

We pray for those whose workloads have increased:

- The police have reported increased cases of domestic abuse and pick pocketing.
- Job Centre Plus will need to take on extra staff to help those who are unemployed.
- Alison Finch, our town centre

chaplain, as managers and staff look to her for pastoral support.

### Response of the Church

- We praise God for His church, united in prayer and mission. We are exploring ways we can offer people in our town spiritual and practical support. Initial ideas include an area in the town centre where people can access debt advice, prayer space and a food bank. Please contact Marie at CPn ([marie@colchesterprayer.net](mailto:marie@colchesterprayer.net) or 01206 752798) if you'd like to know more about these ideas or be part of making it happen.
- Alison Finch has some leaflets which offer advice for those recently made redundant (*contact details below*)

*Marie*

Please pray for:

### Essex Churches Council for Industry and Commerce (ECCIC)

Essex Industrial Mission is a programme of the Churches in the County that aims to bring Christian ministry to all people at work. Workplace Chaplains each regularly visit workplaces to listen, to understand the pressures of the workplace, and offer support and care where they can.

**Colchester Workplace Chaplain**  
Rev. Alison Finch 01206 868043  
[chaplain@alisonfinch.com](mailto:chaplain@alisonfinch.com)

## Through Faith Mission

### Evangelism is a doing Word.

You can't read the New Testament for long without realising that there is a responsibility, to spread "The Good News". Did not someone, in some way help you to have a relationship with the living God?

Jesus encourages us in the Gospels to do this (See: Matthew 28 v9-20, Mark 16 v15-16, Luke 24 v47-48, John 20 v21-23, Acts 1 v8-9.)

Please note Jesus chose mainly "fishermen" to follow him, and indeed help him to talk about "His Father in Heaven and His Kingdom on Earth", and fishing sometimes takes a bit of getting used to, as there are new skills to master. He also chose tax collectors and people of other professions to follow him.

Through Faith Mission has been

training and equipping "fishers of men" since 1991 and practises what it preaches every year, with an area mission, requiring hundreds of fishermen.

This year the mission is "Walk National Forest" Leicestershire west to Staffordshire (12th -27th September) and will require approx 350 followers of Jesus Christ.

This is an opportunity to live simply and obediently for one week, spreading the Gospel (yes you will do it) not relying on our possessions (cars, mobile phones, much money) but looking to God to give us this day our daily bread.

So the local training for this mission, is **Friday evening 15<sup>th</sup>**

**May** (Pub evangelism instruction followed by practical) sleep on St John's Church hall floor, and

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May** will include Survey work (people's personal beliefs) with practical, introduction to Schools work, preparing your personal testimony, general guidance/tips, etc.

Finally, if you have been a Christian for a few years and are getting comfortable in Church, this is the time and the vehicle for you, as God has a vast storeroom of gifts for those who "go outside the Camp, and bear the shame that Jesus bore".

Supporting Websites:

[www.through-faith-mission.org](http://www.through-faith-mission.org) & [www.walkcumbria.org](http://www.walkcumbria.org)

For further information, please contact Rev Peter Adams on Col 854041 or [peter@through-faith-mission.org](mailto:peter@through-faith-mission.org)

## Marriage Week UK

Marriage Week UK celebrates the diversity and vibrancy of marriage as the basis for family life in the UK. It is timed to include Valentine's Day, **7<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> February 2009** and has been held every year since 1997.

Marriage remains incredibly popular – over 90% of young people in the UK aspire to be married at some point in the future, and the large majority will achieve this. Although the popular view is that marriages don't last, two out of every three first marriages will last until one partner dies, and one in two second or subsequent marriages will also last a lifetime. The Divorce rate (the number of divorces per 1000 married couples) has remained virtually static since the early 1980's.

Current research suggests that the enduring stability of marriage results from the commitment that two people make to each other, embodied in their vows, and supported by family, friends, and society at large. Many couples today however come to marriage to celebrate the stability of their relationships rather than to initiate them, so we see couples marrying later in life, often after living together for a period, and often after buying their home and starting a family.

The theme of Marriage Week in 2009 is "Celebrating Commitment", reflecting both the way that many couples see marriage, and the need for society at large to continue to celebrate the stability that married families bring to society. *National Marriage Week* <http://www.nmw.org.uk/>

**Street Pastors.** We currently have 45 active Street Pastors and we are now looking to increase our numbers.

Colchester Street Pastors has been running now for over a year and has been a real blessing to the town. The police and council are thrilled about what we are doing and we would like to continue this good work.

Would you or anyone you know like to join the team? The training will start on **Sat 21st February from 10am** at St Johns' Church, Ipswich Road.

If you would like any further information please contact me.

Many thanks, James Collitt

07977 510880

[james\\_collitt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:james_collitt@hotmail.co.uk)

## Fairtrade Fortnight

**Fairtrade fortnight runs from 23<sup>rd</sup> February to 8<sup>th</sup> March**, why not make a point to pray for the Fairtrade Foundation during this time and the range of activities and campaigns taking place? Fairtrade aims to give producers in the developing world a fair deal, trade really can lift people out of poverty.

“The Fairtrade Foundation vision is “of a world in which justice and sustainable development are at the heart of trade structures and practices so that everyone, through their work, can maintain a decent and dignified livelihood and develop their full potential.

To achieve this vision, Fairtrade seeks to transform trading structures and practices in favour of the poor and disadvantaged. By

facilitating trading partnerships based on equity and transparency, Fairtrade contributes to sustainable development for marginalised producers, workers and their communities. Through demonstration of alternatives to conventional trade and other forms of advocacy, the Fairtrade movement empowers citizens to campaign for an international trade system based on justice and fairness.” (extract from “What is Fair Trade?” on the Fairtrade Foundation Website)

There are many other ways to support Fairtrade besides praying.

- You can, of course buy Fair Trade goods wherever possible, there is now a huge range available including flowers, cotton, sweets, biscuits, herbs, spices, sports balls, honey etc,

- Has your fellowship considered becoming a Fair Trade church? It isn't onerous or time consuming.
- You could obtain a stock of cards which you can give to local store managers to ask them to stock particular fairly goods.
- Or, if you want to do something “off the wall” you could take part in the Fairtrade Foundation's “Go Bananas” event – an attempt to set a world record for the number of Fair Trade bananas eaten in 24 hours between noon on 6<sup>th</sup> March and noon on 7<sup>th</sup> March. Don't worry – you'll only have to eat one!

Visit the Fairtrade foundation's website [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk) for details of these and many other aspects of the work . *Brian Ford*

## Training, news and events

### Out for Good and Korban training days

Two training and networking days around working with young people in crisis in the **Korban Trust**, and **Out For Good**.

Dates: **Saturday 14th March & Saturday 21st March**. Lunch will be provided plus training materials. Costs will be covered by donations.

Training modules are geared to those wishing to engage with young people at risk, and those already involved, examining values, attitudes, boundaries, homelessness, offending, relationships.

Venue: Kingsland Church  
Lexden, London Road, Colchester  
Details from Pete Hope  
07941 019750

**Christianity Explored.** If you are from a church based in Colchester it could be time to book your place at the Christianity Explored leaders/evangelism training conferences. Biblical Evangelism Strategy training conferences are aimed at anyone organising a Christianity Explored (CE) course in their local church.

Delegates will explore:

1. The essentials of a Biblical underpinning for evangelism
2. Developing an evangelism strategy for their local church
3. CE course materials via a week 3 simulation
4. The Gospel of Mark

Venue: All Saints Fordham  
Saturday 21st March 2009  
10am to 5pm.

Details: 01206 243261 or [www.fordhamchurch.org.uk](http://www.fordhamchurch.org.uk)

### The Beautiful Conference. A retreat day for ladies

Saturday 14th February 2009  
The Jesus Centre, King Harold Road, Colchester  
10.00am - 4.00 pm (Registration from 9.30 am)

*God is beautiful and He thinks you are too!*

*Join us for a day of worship, experiencing the Father's love, food and fun*

*Teaching sessions include:*

- *Beautiful God - the Father's heart*
- *Beautiful Saviour - the passionate heart*
- *Beautiful You*

*Places limited to 35. To book a place email Anne Taylor*

[taylormade4u@ntlworld.com](mailto:taylormade4u@ntlworld.com)

# Feedback and Town News

**Colchester Institute.** The CU has been invited to share about the Christian faith during the college's diversity week (**23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> February**). I have some ideas, such as carrying out faith questionnaires, hosting a prayer room and inviting a guest speaker at the end of the week to share testimony of how God changes peoples lives. I would really appreciate your prayers in planning for this and for getting the students involved. Please pray for wisdom in decision making, for support from Christian staff and students in the college, for unity when putting a plan of action together, for availability of key people from outside of the college, for God to start preparing the ground and above all else for fruit from our labour. Thank you. *Natasha*

## Friends International (F.I.)

### Praise that:

- The outing to Mill Race nurseries went really well with 30 students attending.
- Several students helped themselves to Christian literature.

### Pray for:

- The health of the team members.
- The Christianity Awareness week on campus from **Sunday 8th - 14th February**. Pray for a good number to attend the informal cafés held that week and for the 1000 gospels of St Mark's gospel that will be given out. Please pray that many will be read and students will come to know the Lord.

**Many thanks for your prayers!**  
God bless, from *Joan*

**CYO.** One of the most important things we want to do this term is to review where we've got to, and begin to plan ahead for the rest of this year and years ahead.

Our focus remains on how we can best enable young people to discover and encounter God for themselves and live for him. In this we are keen to continue to develop partnerships with churches and youth workers so that together we can be even more effective in mission and discipleship. Please pray with us over this month that we will see clearly and respond faithfully to the challenges and opportunities God sets before us. *Tim Abbott*

**2011.** Seeking God's blessing for Colchester (SGBfC) is currently prayerfully considering a town-wide event in 2011. More information later in the year.

**Hope in Colchester.** Following the wonderful collaboration between congregations and organisation in 2008, we continue to work and pray together under the Hope banner. More details in next month's prayer guide. For more information contact James Collitt 07977 510880 [james\\_collitt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:james_collitt@hotmail.co.uk)

**Christmas Feast.** On Saturday 20th December, 20 volunteers provided a Christmas Feast for 50 people. Thank you to the cooks, who provided a 3 course roast dinner, the hosts and servers, the carol singers, the musicians, and of course, the washer ups!

A big thank you to St Botolph's Church who gave us the venue, and to our friends from 24-7 Prayer UK, and around Colchester, who donated £220.

Many of the guests were grateful for the meal, and we had a fun time together. There was a chance to pray with some guests.

It showed me the need for food and warmth, and need for a welcome and sense of family. I feel a door has opened, and I wonder how to step through and respond to this opportunity. Please give your com-

ments if you have ideas.

Our next idea is supporting the overflow accommodation for the Night shelter. This will be the last week of January and last week of February. Please contact me if you're interested in helping...

love Richard Smith

01206 522781

[richard@colchesterboilerroom.org.uk](mailto:richard@colchesterboilerroom.org.uk)

**Praying for London.** In May Street Pastors from each of the London Boroughs will spend their evening shift praying on the streets as they walk.

Over the next few months plans are in place to begin to pray more strategically into some of the 'tough' issues and hard areas faced by some of the London Street Pastors.

Les Isaacs is setting up this event and has asked for people from Colchester to get involved. The date for this prayer event is **May 22nd** and it is hoped some of the Colchester Street Pastors will go up to support this. The prayer walking will be followed by a united prayer gathering at 1am, venue yet to be confirmed. You may like to get involved in either of the following ways:

- Praying leading up to the event. (Contact Teresa at Prayernet)
- Or if you think you would like to go to London to pray on the Streets with their Street Pastors on May 22nd (more details soon) please contact Katy Smith 01206 522781 or [kt\\_anywhere@hotmail.com](mailto:kt_anywhere@hotmail.com)

*Teresa*