

www.emergingchurch.info

—a touching place for the emerging church

Emergingchurch.info is a website sharing stories, reflections and discussion from fresh expressions of church. It is widely regarded as an online hub for the emerging church community in the UK and further afield as well as a valuable source of information for the wider church community.

"...the re-imagining of church that has been taking place in the last 20 years as a response to our rapidly changing UK mission context..."

GEORGE LINGS
DIRECTOR OF THE CHURCH ARMY
SHEFFIELD CENTRE, UK

[HTTP://EMERGINGCHURCH.INFO/
REFLECTION/GEORGELINGS](http://emergingchurch.info/reflection/georgelings)



"...a great site, and they do a wonderful job in connecting emerging church groups..."

JASON CLARKE, EMERGENT UK

what is the emerging church?

The 'emerging church' is a term used to describe fresh thinking and practice in the church which has a strong mission focus in a western post-modern context. Such thinking with a unique awareness of cultural relevance has been developing over the last 15-20 years. Now the emerging church is gathering interest from around the globe with churches keen to hear of new ideas and thinking that will help them reach out to mainstream culture and in many cases provide a possible lifeline for survival.

It is this situation that has placed www.emergingchurch.info a key online presence for both the growing numbers who comprise the emerging church and those looking for inspiration and hope.

what's on the website?

The stories and reflections on the site are all from people 'being church' rather than distant observers and reflect a wide range of experiences - from embryonic groups to established churches. Stories of celebration and growth but also frustration and failure lend the site an honest and organic feel with no agenda other than to offer a wider audience to those who wish to tell their story. The evolution of the emerging church can also be seen as contributors regularly try to put into words the theology and theory of what is happening as people seek to celebrate and work out Christian faith in contemporary culture. People often respond to previous articles with fresh insights or visit the site and find themselves inspired to write of their own experiences thus giving the site a genuine momentum and vitality.

The site itself is also constantly evolving to best serve those who use it - recent additions have included a 'beginners guide' and an interactive 'prayer lava lamp' to enable people to pray online. May 2005 saw 'emergingchurch.live!' take place - a day when users of the site could gather together, reflect on progress so far and suggest how the site might develop in the future. It is this organic approach that ensures emergingchurch.info is authentic - the real deal.

who visits?

Launched in October 2003, the site currently regularly receives between 10,000 & 15,000 unique visits per month from around the world and has a large 'google' footprint (over 50,000 links - more than most UK denominations). The site's core audience is practitioners, thinkers and drivers of the emerging church, students researching contemporary church trends and church leaders from both emerging and traditional expressions of church.

who started and funds the site?

Since its inception the site has been envisioned and funded by CMS (Church Mission Society), RUN (Reaching the Unchurched Network), YFC (Youth for Christ), URC (United Reformed Church) with additional funding from The Methodist Church, The Church Army (Sheffield Centre), The Baptist Union, Spring Harvest and Churches Together in England and Wales.

emergingchurch.info timeline

october 2003
site launched

october 2004 site
already has almost
100 stories and
reflections

january 2005 number
of unique visitor to
site exceeds 10,000
per month

may 2005
emergingchurch.info live! -
an envisioning day with users
and contributors to the site

“...the starting place is being in the real world... looking at what worship, mission and community could look like...”

IAN MOBSBY
MOOT - AN EXPANDING EMERGING CHURCH PROJECT IN LONDON

[HTTP://EMERGINGCHURCH.INFO/REFLECTION/IANMOBSBY](http://emergingchurch.info/reflection/ianmobsby)



“...packed with stories, reflections, blogs and much much more. A brilliant site...”

CPAS - CHURCH PASTORAL AID SOCIETY
CPAS.ORG.UK

Having established itself both within the emerging church community and as a resource for those observing or just encountering the term, it is now our intention to develop the site further over three years to meet the demands of visitors and cope with the site's growth.

how you can be part of the story

—inspiring mission

Four years of stories, reflections and exploration of the emerging church are a considerable resource for anyone engaged in mission in contemporary culture. It's also a resource that is now testing the site's original design and we need to move to a database-driven system to enable this unique and vibrant archive to be fully available and searchable online and cope with all future content. Accompanying this will be a move to a CSS style website in order to meet accessibility requirements.

—reflecting and resourcing

Our latest development is identifying and collating academic research - a sign that the emerging church is coming of age and being taken seriously as a missional force. It is our intention to put more resources into sharing both fresh and established voices reflecting on the practice, theology and growth of the emerging church alongside continued stories from the 'coal face' of mission. This spirit-fuelled combination of honest voices and studied reflection is a unique and continually renewing source of learning and encouragement for fresh expressions of church and those who are interested in exploring the possibilities of being church in the 21st century.

—cutting edge faith

From its inception, emergingchurch.info has used contemporary technology to share stories of Good News. We were early documenters of the blogosphere, have helped pioneer online worship and always sought to inhabit the same cultural space as the mission pioneers whose stories and reflections we share. We wish to continue this direction and freshen the site's design and functionality to make the most of connectivity with 'web 2.0' developments, thus retaining our current networks and enabling even more people to discover and engage with the emerging church.

the cost

A preliminary breakdown of development costs is shown below. A more detailed explanation plus a simple to understand primer on technical specification and web developments can be found on an accompanying sheet 'technical stuff'.

	2008	2009	2010
Continuation of site	£4000	£4000	£4000
Development of database, css and web 2.0 functionality	£5000	£5000	£5000
Total cost	£9000	£9000	£9000

contribute

To enable us to ensure the future development of the site we are seeking funding from those who value mission, and above all share a passion to spread the Good News in today's culture. Please contact:

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Tel: +44 (0)1865 787400 Email: paul.thaxter@cms-uk.org

or use online donation facilities at www.emergingchurch.info

June 2005. online prayer 'lava lamp' feature added

October 2005. a 'beginners guide' to emerging church launched due to requests by visitors

June 2006. emergingchurch.info featured on ABC TV (Australia)

December 2006. emerging church research section begun

the future. you help decide...