

## AIPM at Thornaby – 2001 - 2005

This description of AIPM’s ministry at Thornaby Baptist Church (TBC) will be much longer than usual, This is because it was our first long-term interim ministry with multiple American volunteers, we had so many experiences (almost all good) and the Lord worked in so many wonderful ways that the story needs telling!

Thornaby was the second UK church served by AIPM. In August 2000, Chuck McComb and Rev. David Hunt (Regional Minister – Missions for the Northern Baptist Association) met with the leadership team at TBC and their moderator, Rev. David Lilly. This was at the time the Pat and I were wrapping up the first AIPM assignment at Cambridge Road BC in nearby Middlesbrough. David and I met with David Lilly and the TBC deacons, Barbara Mazzetti, Dorothy Wilson, Maxine and Paul Wright and Allan Robinson. We explained how our ministry had worked at Cambridge Road and answered questions. Happily, the leadership team agreed to recommend to the church meeting that AIPM be asked to provide candidates for interim pastor.



Thornaby Baptist Church & Church Hall

As is the usual practice, TBC Secretary Barbara Mazzetti contacted me and asked for information on candidates from the USA. I found Rev. Bill Standley (wife Bartie) in my home church, Sagemont Baptist Church, was able and willing to serve. I sent their information to TBC and the deacons felt God’s leading to recommend to the church meeting that they call Bill and Bartie.



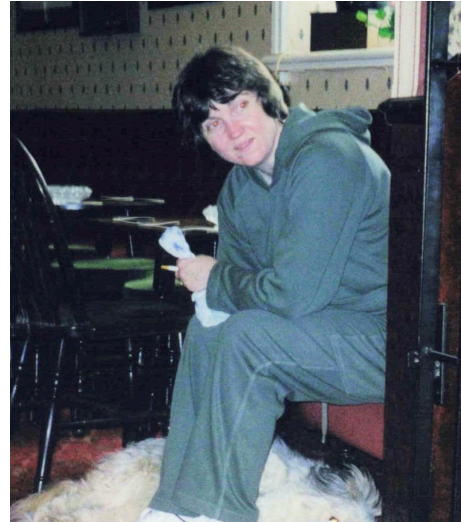
Bill & Bartie Standley

I will detail what transpired NOT to criticize anyone but to illustrate that God has solutions for all our problems and He often speaks through His children to solve those problems! There were 20 church members present and voting. Fifteen were in favor of calling Bill Standley. Five were opposed. Alan Crooks and his wife, another couple and one widower friend of the Crooks were the no votes. Alan “just happened to have a copy of the church’s constitution which we understand he wrote” and cited a passage that said an 85% majority must call a pastor. Maxine, we believe led by the Holy Spirit, responded that surely that requirement was for calling a permanent pastor. She suggested that the church leave it up to Bill Standley to decide if he would accept a call with only 85% in favor. The church voted

a second time with the same result, 15/5. This majority vote was accepted, and Barbara notified me of that process and asked if Bill would accept the invitation. Bill accepted and a wonderful 4-years ministry began in June 2001!



Alan Crooks at Sound Board



Maxine Wright, Thornaby Church Chairperson. Along with Barbara Mazzetti led Thornaby to invite AIPM to serve!

Bill and Bartie Standley from Sagemont Church in Houston, TX were the first Americans to serve at TBC. In the early years of Bill's adult life, he served as a pastor in Baptist churches in the Houston, TX area. As his family grew, he needed to leave full-time ministry to support his family. During the workweek, he pursued a career as a machinist with Shell Oil Company in Houston. But, in his off hours, he kept on serving the Lord in a layman's role. When Bill retired from Shell, he began mission work in Alaska. And, when Thornaby Baptist church called him, he gladly accepted. TBC had sold their manse many years earlier I suppose because they couldn't afford the salary for a full-time British pastor and needed the funds for operating expenses. This sadly seems to me a sure-fire setup for handicapping the future calling of a pastor! The Salvation Army's local church's current pastor owned his own home, so their manse was empty. TBC were well blessed to rent the house for a very reasonable monthly amount. God provides!



Thornaby Manse (Red Tile)  
Rented from Salvation Army  
For American Interim Pastors

The following details are not intended to be judgmental or critical. We were born with a sin nature, and we all have relapses. But Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples that you love one another" (John 13:35). So, the way we relate to each other is extremely important and God has His ways of fixing relationships. Even before Bill's assignment at Thornaby, he sensed God's leading to preach mainly evangelistic sermons

and took to England many sermons that he had preached in Texas and Alaska. On the first Sunday that the Standley's worshipped at TBC, Bill was in the worship center greeting people as they arrived which is an excellent strategy for making people feel welcome in God's house. He heard very clearly from the rear of the church two women yelling at each other. He rushed back and mentioned that the congregation could hear them and must surely be questioning relationships in the church. Bill asked what the issue was and that the women were arguing about. He learned that it was "a matter of eternal significance," that is - who had the responsibility for ordering paper for the copy machine. Bill and the women went to the pastor's office (vestry) for prayer. At that point, Bill sensed God calling him to focus his preaching and Bible studies on relationships. God always knows what the needs are, and He tells His servants. That preaching/teaching went over very well. On the last evening that Bill and Bartie were in the UK, those same 2 women were at the manse. They gave each other a hug and each one told the other, "I love you." Bill told me that at that point he could go home in peace. He had done what God sent him to do. That set the stage for significant Kingdom advancement at TBC by the Americans that followed the Standley's. Bill and Bartie served from June to December 2001.



Chuck and Pat McComb followed the Stanley's at TBC. Chuck had finished a 35-year career as a Mechanical Engineer with Monsanto Chemical Company in 1997 and had begun volunteer pastoral ministry. Chuck and Pat served Thornaby from January to July 2002. During that assignment TBC conducted the 12-week Alpha Course. Jenny Crooks co-taught the course with Chuck. One of the special features of the Alpha Course is a fellowship meal for the group. Several of the members of the church volunteered to prepare the meals and do the washing up so that the course leaders could give their undivided attention to the group members. The course concludes

with a day-long session "away." That session was held in a pub's private room in the North Yorkshire Moors. The away session includes 3 course modules that deal with the Holy Spirit. The final session is a time for inquiries about spiritual commitments. No commitments were made at the session, but some that attended the course were baptized later that year.

In addition to "Moms and Tots," TBC had youth ministry going for 8 to 12-year-olds. Julie Simpson was the designated youth leader and was excellent. She had been in the British Army reserves and understood discipline – how to set the example and enforce the rules. This was extremely helpful with some youngsters who apparently had not had discipline modeled for them or enforced. To try to get the most spiritual benefit from the weekly youth meetings and activities, a youth counsel was created. Some mature church members as



well as some local youth and parents were invited to help with the planning. That worked very well. We think the parents were pleased to be involved and valued.



Youth Counsel (part) L to R: Julie Simpson, Youth Leader, Thornaby Member ?, Chuck McComb, Interim Pastor and Harry Cuthbert.



Youth Counsel (part) L to R: Hazel Harrison, Mary Wetherill, Barbara Mazzetti and parents of youth and youth from community.

In the spring of 2002, a Baylor University student and member of The Heights Baptist Church in Richardson, TX, Sarah Bodie, came to Thornaby to help with our youth ministry. My memory is not clear on how her ministry was arranged but I expect the close relationship that John Wills, Minister of Education at Sagemont, had with The Heights' Minister of Youth, David Rogers, was a strong influence. Sarah stayed in the home of TBC member, Mary Wetherill who was on the youth counsel. Sarah did an excellent job at Thornaby and that gave us the idea that in addition to providing volunteer interim pastors, AIPM might also provide volunteer youth workers. That part of our ministry has enjoyed great success.



Sarah Bodie with Chuck & Pat McComb

Also, in the spring of 2002, TBC considered candidates for interim pastor for the back half of 2002. TBC was the first and only UK church to select in one setting 2 candidates to serve in back-to-back assignments. They selected Ken and Liz Bugh from Sagemont Church in Houston and Luther and Betty Scarborough from Sagamore Hills Baptist Church in Ft. Worth, TX. Ken had had a career in sales in the office products industry but was available to serve 6-months at Thornaby. After the Thornaby assignment, Ken managed a Lifeway Book Store at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and later became a capital fund raiser for Moody until his retirement. The Bugh's served Thornaby from early July 2002 until late December. Ken baptized 3 adults at Thornaby. Ken is Vice President of AIPM and a long-time supporter!





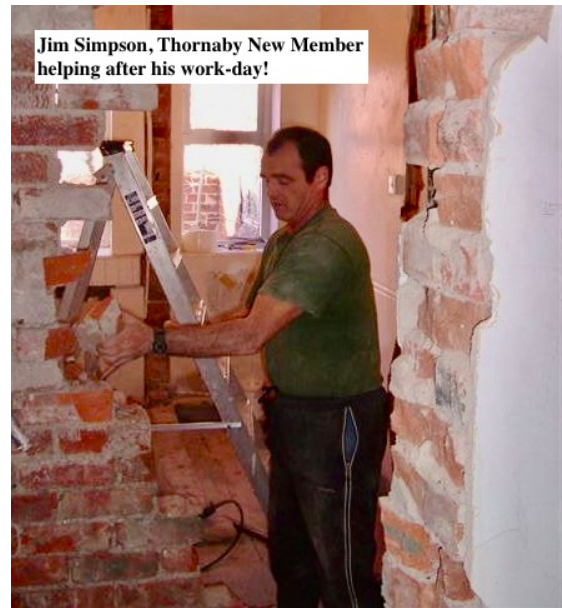
Ken & Liz Bugh



Thornaby Baptism

L to R: Ken Bugh, Interim Pastor, Colin Mazzetti & Paul Wright, Deacon

We are taught in Scripture to “go the extra mile.” Ken had an experience at TBC equal to “going the extra knot” because the North Sea was involved. Jim Simpson, husband of Julie, TBC’s youth leader, was not yet a believer in Christ but became friends with Ken. Jim loved Kayaking in the North Sea which was only a few miles from Thornaby. Jim invited Ken to join him kayaking. Ken was eager to know Jim better and share the Gospel with him, so he accepted. Jim had a wet suit, but Ken only had blue jeans. Of course, they both got wet! The North Sea is freezing cold 365 days each year and Ken froze! But later he led Jim to faith in Christ. That made the dip in the North Sea so worthwhile! The American interim pastor that followed Ken, Luther Scarborough, had the pleasure of baptizing Jim Simpson! Two years later, when a project team came from Texas, Jim volunteered for construction work on TBC’s building. Sadly, Jim passed away a few years ago at a relatively young age. We praise the Lord that he is in heaven, and we shall meet again! Jim and Ken’s story is a glaring reminder that followers of Christ need to be willing to do whatever is possible to earn the right and opportunity to share the Gospel!



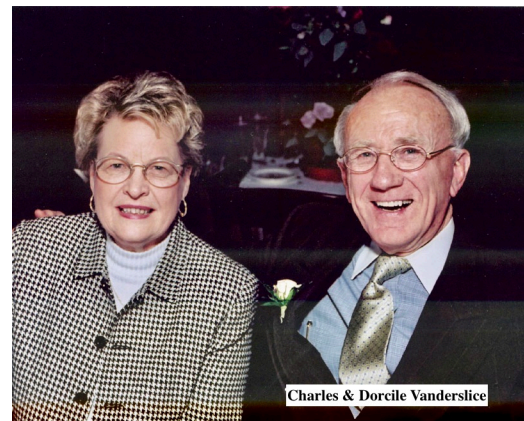
Jim Simpson, Thornaby New Member helping after his work-day!

Luther and Betty Scarborough’s served Thornaby the first half of 2003. Interestingly, Luther ran an insurance agency in Arlington, TX. He simply turned over the business to his partners and took 6-months off to serve Jesus Christ in the UK.



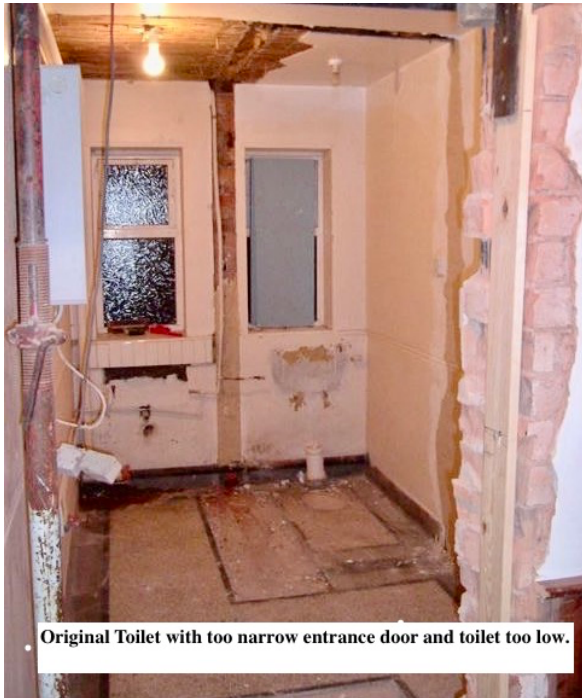
A total of 9 adults were baptized at TBC. Luther baptized 6 of the 9. We learned about Luther from Ken Bugh. Ken had known Luther for a several years and knew that for more than 20 years, Luther had been a teacher in Bible Study Fellowship, a highly respected Bible study ministry. Ken also knew that Luther was highly respected in the Ft. Worth area. Colin Mazzetti told us an interesting characteristic of Luther Scarborough. Colin said that it was impossible to make any progress walking on the pavement (sidewalk) with Luther. He had a habit of stopping and talking to everyone that he met. Colin said that 50-yards without a stop was about Luther's maximum progress! That seems an excellent way to get to know the neighbors!

The fifth couple to serve TBC was Charles and Dorcille Vanderslice from First Baptist Church, Mineola, TX. They served the last half of 2003. Charles was the founding pastor of The Heights Baptist Church in Richardson, TX. He also served on the faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary. He finished his ministry career serving with the Southern Baptist Annuity Board's pension system. Charles and Dorcille continued the work that was started by earlier American interim pastors at Thornaby. Charles recognized the difficulty that some of the elderly members were having getting out on cold winter nights for Wednesday evening Bible study and prayer meetings. He began having the same studies and prayer meetings in the manse on Wednesday mornings! Very shortly all the seating room in the manse was filled. And the attendance at Wednesday evening services did not decline! All the interim pastors that followed the Vanderslice's followed his pattern! While at TBC, Charles observed that repairs were needed on the church building and had the idea of returning in 2004 with a work crew from First Baptist, Mineola.



Chuck and Pat McComb returned to Thornaby for a second 6-month assignment in January 2004. The Vanderslice's mission/project team's visit to Thornaby was one of the highlights of that period. The team converted 2 toilets for use by disabled persons. That work was required by UK law and had to be completed by October 2004. Imagine the church's delight when the team finished it in April. And the team saved TBC several thousand dollars in the process!





Original Toilet with too narrow entrance door and toilet too low.



Rev. Charles Vanderslice, Project Organizer, member FBC Mineola, TX and Thornaby Interim Pastor last half 2003.



New Floor Tile Laid by Project Team



Completed Raised Toilet for persons with disabilities.

Of course, a fellowship meal seemed the appropriate way to express heart felt thanks from the folks at TBC to the Mineola, TX brothers and sisters in Christ – not that Baptists the world around particularly need a reason to have a meal together! Interestingly, when the Mazzetti's visited us in Texas the following year, a day trip to worship at First Baptist Mineola and meal with the members of the project team was a high priority.



Project Completion Celebration Mean with Thornaby Members & Team from First Baptist Church, Mineola, TX



Fellowship meal clean-up crew. L to R: Amanda Jones, Dorothy Wilson & Jean Wright

Another highlight of the first half of 2004 at TBC was the ministry of Curtis and Amanda Jones as youth workers. Amanda had recently graduated from Texas A and M University and Curtis had graduated from Houston Baptist University. They had only recently gotten married. Amanda was working in her mother, Beth Moore's ministry, Living Proof Ministries. Curtis sensed God's call to ministry but had not yet accepted a call to serve in a particular ministry. Curtis and Amanda sensed God calling them to an overseas mission assignment and contacted us about serving with AIPM. That was a great fit and the need at TBC was urgent. TBC called then and did a wonderful ministry for 6-months from around March to September 2004. Two examples of God providing for His kids to do His ministry, an apartment that had been used by the curate of the local Anglican church was available for a reasonable monthly rent. A friend of mine from my work on Monsanto's chemical plant expansion 25-years earlier had a second car that he was not using and let me drive it so I could let Curtis and Amanda drive the church owned car.



Curtis & Amanda Jones

Because of Pat's dad's serious illness in St. Louis, Pat and I had to leave TBC 2-weeks early. Pat's dad survived the episode, and we praise the Lord for that. Our early departure was one of 3 occasions where interim pastors had to leave temporarily or cut their assignments short. In every case, the British church members were totally understanding and totally supportive of our personal needs – an example of British graciousness, especially among God's family!

This is a good time for a segue back to comments about Alan Crooks. Although he was opposed to AIPM serving at TBC initially, he warmed up to our ministry and we had some



good experiences with him. He learned of my interest in British railways. Because he had worked his entire adult life for British Rail, he was quite knowledgeable. He had an elaborate model railway kit in his attic and invited me to visit his display. Later, Alan took me on a 1-day outing to the British Railway Museum in York. I enjoyed listening to his explanations of all things involved in railway operations.

To illustrate the influence that Christian mentors have on young people, I want to relate Alan's story. As a lad, Alan was in the Boys Brigade at TBC. His Brigade leader was an observant man and asked Alan if he could read and write. Alan could not. The leader offered to teach Alan, and he did. When Alan reached age 14, he left school to work. In those years unless university was in the plans, boys and girls started working as apprentices at that age. The Brigade leader worked for British Rail and got Alan an apprentice position of some sort. I feel sure it was at the lowest level in British Rail. Alan was smart and worked hard and rose through the ranks such that at the time of his retirement after I'm guessing 50 years, he was an inspector of train drivers! I would guess that is an enormously important position. When I get to heaven, I want to thank that Brigade leader! And in the here-and-now, I am reminded that people who oppose us can be brought alongside us with the Lord's help. No doubt all 7 or the American interim pastors that served our Lord at TBC contributed to the turnaround of Alan Crooks attitude to our ministry.

Because of our early departure from TBC, Pat and I were not able to host Jim and Brenda Martin from Lake Jackson, TX for a few days as is customary for orientation. But Jim and Brenda were seasoned servants of Jesus Christ and settled in at TBC very well. They had a wonderful 6-month ministry in the second half of 2004. Jim and Brenda had learned about AIPM from an interview on KHCB Christian Radio in Houston. They heard Bruce Munsterman at KHCB interviewing me and Barbara Mazzetti from Thornaby when they were visiting in our home. That was just one or two days after Jim's retirement from Dow Chemical Company where he had had a 30-plus year career as a Chemical Engineer. Amazing how God never gets the timing wrong!



The Martin's were followed by James and Jo Still from Sulphur, LA. James had served many years as pastor of Baptist churches in Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. The Still's served at TBC from January to June 2005 completing 4 years of AIPM at TBC. Happily, TBC was able to have a British pastor and called David Whitehall from Liverpool. Attendance at TBC approximately doubled over the 4-year period of AIPM, and we are grateful to our Father in Heaven for the opportunity to serve alongside those wonderful Christian people. All 7 American couples were so well received, and we made life-long friendships at Thornaby!

AIPM volunteers were tremendously blessed to baptize 9 people over the 4-years we served at Thornaby Baptist Church!

