

AIPM at St. Paul's Baptist Church, Skegness – 2008 – 2009

The most encouraging results of the 3 American interim pastors serving at St. Paul's Baptist Church (SPBC) in Skegness is that 10 adults were baptized in the 18-months they served! SPBC had been in touch with us early in 2007 at the recommendation of Rev. Steve Mantle, Regional Minister for the East Midlands Baptist Association. My wife, Pat and I (Chuck McComb) had a trip planned to the UK for September that year and arranged to visit SPBC on 13 September 2007. They graciously welcomed us and allowed me to present information about AIPM at an evening meeting of the entire congregation. They also did an outstanding job of presenting details about their ministries. When we left them, we were excited about the possibility that some of our volunteers might be invited to serve alongside those good people. And they did get to! British churches usually prepare a profile of their church and community as a way of informing prospective future pastors and we find that document very helpful in the orientation of candidates that might serve in those churches. SPBC's profile is included below as an example. The profile also helped us prepare the flyer below to advertise the opportunity here in America.



Jim Martin (wife Brenda) was the first American interim pastor to serve at SPBC. He and Brenda started there in January 2008. This was their second of 2 assignments in the UK. They had served the last half of 2004 at Thornaby. Before going to Thornaby, Jim had only recently retired from Dow Chemical Company. As a very active layman for more than 30-years in Lake Jackson, TX, Jim was eager to serve Jesus Christ in his retirement years. They had listened to a Christian radio station in Houston, TX, KHCB. They heard an interview that station manager, Bruce Munstermann did with Barbara Mazzetti, Church Secretary at Thornaby who was visiting us and me. The Martins sensed God's calling them to apply for an assignment.

They prepared their profiles and videotapes of a sermon and interview. We sent their information along with information on other candidates to Thornaby in 2004 and Skegness in 2007 and the Lord led both UK churches to invite them to serve. Below is an article that was published in the Baptist Union of Great Britain's newspaper, The Baptist Times, regarding the Martin's serving in Skegness. The local Skegness newspaper also did the below article about the Martin's ministry. Jim Baptized 5 adults at St. Paul's Baptist Church. Jim and Brenda's home church sent a small youth mission team to Skegness near the end of the Martin's assignment. Jim's report on that trip is below as an example of the kind of ministry can be accomplished for God's glory and the development of a heart for missions in His young people the world around!

Seaside Skegness gets a little Texan flavour

By PAUL HOBSON

MEMBERS of St Paul's Baptist Church in Skegness were preparing to welcome a temporary American pastor this week.

Pastor Jim Martin arrived in England on Thursday and will be inducted this Sunday (January 20).

Mr Martin belongs to

American Interim Pastors Ministries Incorporated (AIPMI), a group of retired Baptist pastors from Texas, USA, and will work with the church until the end of June.

St Paul's has been unable to afford a full-time minister after its previous incumbent left 20 months ago, and lay preachers from Lincoln and Louth have conducted services throughout

this period.

They were told about the possibility of an interim American pastor by regional minister Steve Mantle.

Church administrator David Smith said: 'We are ever so excited by Mr Martin's arrival.'

'He seems very energetic, with a preaching style that is very scriptural and immersed in the word of God.'

'We have been blessed with some extremely gifted lay preachers, but it's not quite the same as having your own minister.'

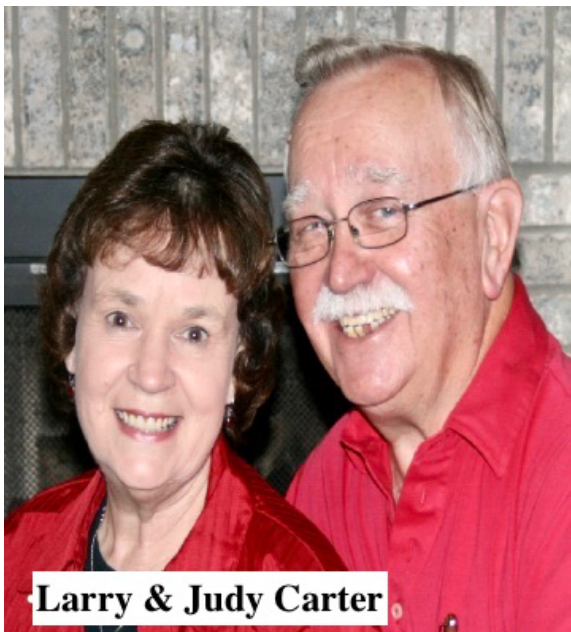
In 2004 he served a Baptist church in Thornaby and has conducted missions around the world.

St Paul's hopes to recruit a full-time minister once its finances are stronger.

John and Jan Ward, also from Lake Jackson, TX followed the Martins at St. Paul's Baptist Church. They also learned about American Interim Pastors Ministries, Inc. by listening to that same KHCB radio interview This was the Ward's first of 5 assignments with AIPM in England. They continued St. Paul's ministry activities alongside the good people at St. Paul's. As indicated by the wonderful number of baptisms over the 18-month period, evangelism was a high priority of the St. Paul's members and interim pastors. John baptized one of the 10. After their service at St. Paul's, John and Jan served at Henley-in-Arden, Bootle Evangelical Church in Cumbria and Bootle a second time then most recently, Stow-on-the-Wold.



John & Jan Ward



Larry & Judy Carter

The final American interim pastor at St. Paul's was Jerry Carter (wife Judy) from Aurora, Illinois. Sadly, shortly after they returned home from Skegness, Larry developed some health issues which precluded their allowing AIPM to put their names in the hat for serving at other British churches.

At the conclusion of AIPM's ministry at St. Paul's Baptist Church, the very active deacon and church leader, Raish Sarin became pastor of St. Paul's!



St. Paul's Baptist Church in Worship



L to R: Raiah Sarin, Deacon; Tim, Jim Marin, Interim Pastor



St. Paul's - Deacon Raiah Sarin on Left, Interim Pastor Jerry Carter on Right

American pastor to take over at church

By Patrick O'Kane

patrick.okane@jpress.co.uk

AN American pastor is to take over the reins at St Paul's Baptist Church, Beresford Avenue, Skegness, on January 20.

The church has been without a minister for 20 months and Pastor Jim Martin will take over the pastorate for six months.

Members of St Paul's are excited about their new pastor, who will be joined by his wife Brenda.

Administrator at the church David Smith said: "When the previous minister left we couldn't afford to finance a full-time minister.

"With the help of regional minister the Rev Steve Mantle we contacted the American pastors and they were keen to come and help."

Mr Martin belongs to American Interim Pastors Ministries Incorporated, a group of retired Baptist pastors from Texas, USA.

Lay preachers from Lincoln and Louth have conducted



American pastor Jim Martin will take over the reins at St Paul's Baptist Church, Skegness, later this month. He is pictured with his wife Brenda. Photo supplied.

services in the absence of a minister and Mr Smith believes they will continue to help out when the new pastor arrives.

Visa regulations mean Mr Martin can only stay for around six months and he will work without a salary, but will be reimbursed any expenses.

He has previously served a Baptist church in Thornaby, Teeside, and has conducted

missions around the world.

Members of the church are hopeful another American pastor will visit to help support the future of the church.

Mr Smith added: "We hope the help of American pastors will help to build a fellowship and strengthen support for the church.

"Once our finances are stronger we can support a full-time minister."

MISSION OPPORTUNITY

For Retired American Pastors or Lay Leaders.

ST. PAUL'S BAPTIST CHURCH

SKEGNESS, LINCOLNSHIRE ENGLAND

Retirees or others who are self-supporting serve in a series of six-month assignments as volunteer interim pastors as the Lord grows His church and it can afford the salary and locate a British Baptist pastor.

Skegness is a resort town of about 16,000 winter population (much higher in summer) on the North Sea coast about 140 miles north of London.



MANSE (PARSONAGE)



MANSE LIVING ROOM



MANSE CONSERVATORY

ST. PAUL'S BAPTIST HISTORY

The East Midlands Baptist Association founded the church in 1874 following missions work on the beaches the year previous. "Sands Mission" beach teams have been based at St. Paul's for 2 weeks in August for 40 years-perhaps longer.



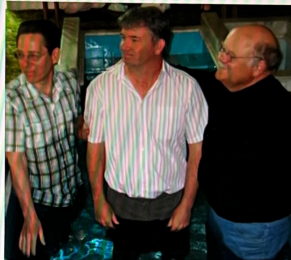
SKEGNESS BEACH (after summer!)

The Church building was formerly St. Paul's Anglican Church. Baptists bought the building and changed the name to St. Paul's Baptist. Membership is 54 with 67 regular attendees and 114 with some connection to the church.

HER CURRENT SITUATION

The previous pastor retired in 2006 and the Regional Minister, Steve Mantle, recommended American Interim Pastors which began in January 2008 with Jim and Brenda Martin from Lake Jackson, TX.

St. Paul's has a variety of ministries--coffee service and a Christian bookshop with a "Pop and Praise" service held 2 or 3 mornings weekly. Their basic Christianity course, Alpha, is well attended.



BAPTISM--JIM MARTIN, ON RIGHT

THE ARRANGEMENT

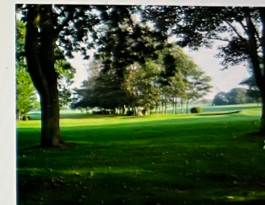
St. Paul's provides air fare, car to drive with insurance and taxes paid and a furnished house with utility bills paid. The interim pastor will receive no salary.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact Chuck McComb, American Interim Pastor Ministries, Inc. 412 Carriage Creek Lane, Friendswood, TX 77546; phone: 281-992-1695, email mccombch@aol.com Web: www.americaninterimpastors.com Chuck, a retired Mechanical Engineer from Monsanto Chemical Company, has had 3 assignments as interim pastor in the UK.



BEACH FRONT SHOPPING



SKEGNESS GOLF COURSE



SKEGNESS LIFEBOAT HOUSE

PROFILE OF ST PAUL'S BAPTIST CHURCH, SKEGNESS, LINCOLNSHIRE - 2007

SKEGNESS

Seaside town developed about 1870 by Earl of Scarborough following construction of railway line to fishing village. Winter population of 16,000 (?) expands in summer to about 100,000. The original Butlins holiday camp is at Ingoldmels, 3 miles away, and there are thousands of static caravans in the area.

This part of Lincolnshire is very flat, so a large proportion of the population is made up of retired people from the midlands. Recent new housing developments have included family houses, and the school population is increasing. There are good schools in the town. New units are being opened on the Industrial Estate.

The population is almost entirely white.

This is a rural, agricultural area with many fields of wheat, cabbages, sheep and cattle, and the towns are well separated, the nearest being Boston (23 miles), Horncastle (24miles), Louth (25 miles), Lincoln (45 miles). Most of these towns have Baptist churches, but our nearest is 6 miles away in the village of Burgh where the present minister was formerly one of our deacons.

ST PAUL'S BAPTIST CHURCH

Situated in Beresford Avenue, just off Lumley Road which is the main shopping area, 200 yards from the clock tower and sea front. Within 10 minutes walk there five other churches: St Matthew's Church of England, the Methodist Church, Salvation Army, New Day (Pentecostal) Fellowship and Roman Catholic Church.

History

Founded in 1894 by East Midland Baptist Association following missions on the sands in previous summers

Present building dates from 1910, seats 250 in fixed pews.

Church hall dates from pre-1894, moved 1910, extended 1952, refurbished 2006.

Membership has fluctuated between 50 and 100

Beach Teams have been based at St Paul's for 2-3 weeks every August for last 40+ years, probably throughout church's history since Sands Missions predated church.

Present Worship

Morning Worship is at 10.45am and is conducted by visiting preachers during the pastoral vacancy. The services are a mixture of old and new in worship, organ and music group being used. 'Songs of Fellowship' volumes 1 and 2 are used, supplemented by OHP and Baptist Hymn Book occasionally. The preacher usually leads the worship, but our keyboard player sometimes leads a section. We are evangelical in theology, being Bible based and outward looking. Children and young people, who at present are few in number, join in the first part of the service before going to their own teaching

groups. At present, Evening Worship is usually conducted by members of our own fellowship at 6.30pm in the church parlour, and videos of Bible studies by well known preachers are often used. Attendances vary, but average 40-50 in the morning and 7-12 in the evening.

Membership

Actual members 54. Total with any connection to church 114. Fairly regular attenders 67, of which 25 are male, 42 are female. Only about 15 are under age 50. 45 are between 50 and 80. Average age 58. Approx half are married couples with no children at home; 30 retired; 10 unemployed; 12 employed.

Strengths

We have a team of workers running Coffee Days and a Christian Bookshop in the church hall 2-3 days a week, which is a good witness in the town and provides a centre where many call in for counselling. A brief morning service called 'Pop in and Praise' is held on three mornings a week from 10.15 to 10.30am, led by preachers from many of the churches in the area, and this is much appreciated by many. Occasional lunches following Sunday morning service are also enjoyed by the fellowship. Alpha courses have been used in the past, some ecumenical with other churches in the town, and we had one in St Paul's in the Spring of 2007. A Pastoral Care Group keeps an eye on all those in the fellowship. The visiting Beach Team is based at and supported by St Paul's every August and is a centre for outreach to visitors on the beach and in the town. We usually mount a 4-day Flower Festival every summer in high season which attracts many visitors. Part of the premises is leased to a Day Nursery. We have an evening house group which is mainly worship and an afternoon Bible study group. Social meetings include leisure and arts groups in the afternoon and an evening Ladies' group.

Weaknesses

We have a shortage of children and young people and in the 25-40 age group. Also, we have no regular prayer meetings, though house groups and Bible studies do have prayer times.

Envisaged profile of Next Minister of St Paul's

Essentials

The first essential is to have a **Leader with a Vision for the growth of God's kingdom in Skegness**. A **Bible teaching, evangelistic preacher** is also essential, who promotes **mission, prayer and spiritual direction**. It is very important to know how to speak to **young people** and visit schools in the town. **Pastoral visiting** is essential and the ability to **resolve conflicts** before they escalate. We have a **team** of workers, and the minister should be able to **lead** them and enable them to **develop their gifts**. The minister should be a **personal evangelist**.

Useful abilities

Being a **counsellor** would be a useful ability. The minister should recognise the value of **music** in leading worship. **Training** others should not be neglected. **Ecumenical cooperation** with other churches in evangelistic initiatives is useful. The **wider ministry** of the East Midland Baptist Association and Baptist Union of Great Britain give valuable support and should not be neglected. **Administrative** ability is useful.

General personality

We envisage our next minister to be an enthusiastic person who has had experience of the world of work before entering the ministry, is approachable, and is an encourager with whom we would cooperate.

**SUMMARY—THE LIGHTHOUSE YOUTH MISSION TRIP TO SKEGNESS—JUNE 2008
BY: JIM MARTIN, AMERICAN INTERIM PASTOR, ST. PAUL'S BAPTIST, SKEGNESS**

There were six people on the team. David and Francine Stoltenberg are the Youth Ministry leaders, and they both worked and witnessed. Francine is an accomplished musician and put together much of the music they performed. She and David actually required the teenagers to do most of their own programming and preparation and fund-raising, which was an integral part of the experience for them. Missions is hard work!! David did a great deal of the manual labor in the Prayer Garden project and sanding and priming the church doors and gate and other exterior woodwork around the church. He and Francine worked with the kids on the children's and youth ministries in Burgh le Marsh and in the school assembly puppet program.

The Kids: There were four teenagers and all of them did all phases of the ministry and work.

Michael Moody is 16. He got to help with the heavy and dirty work, being the token male. He also sings and gave his testimony. Michael is the middle of 3 boys. His paternal grandfather entered God's glory while Michael was on this trip. He didn't know.

Shelby Koffler is also 16. She has a beautiful voice and a winsome spirit. She has a twin brother and a younger brother.

Ashley Krogstad is 14. She is an accomplished pianist and singer. She played for several of the venues, including for the other kids when they sang. She is oldest of 5 children and "Mother." She has a special love for older people and relates to them in an amazing way.

Hannah Stoltenberg is 14 and involved in a Christian dance ministry. She performed two beautiful interpretive pieces at St. Paul's, which were wonderfully received. She also has a beautiful voice. She has an older brother.

The kids did the full range of ministry while they were in Skegness. The first day here the whole group joined church members in clearing the rubbish tip behind the church in preparation for turning it into a Memorial Prayer Garden. They also helped dig up the soil, removed rocks and roots and rubbish, and transformed the whole area into a "blank canvas" for the garden project. They did this in the rain! Welcome to England! During the week in Burgh le Marsh they led a school assembly, during which they presented a puppet sketch on Moses in Pharaoh's court and led the children in a lively song. They also worked with the Baptist Church's children's and younger youth outreach ministries. The Burgh kids really connected with our kids and did not want them to leave.

Back in Skegness, the group sang gave their testimonies, and Hannah danced at the Sunday morning worship service. It was an especially healing and encouraging time for many church members. On Sunday evening they met with the teenagers of St. Paul's, most of whom have not been closely involved with church or Bible Study. They played games and TALKED! There were some serious moments as well, talking of spiritual things. This is much needed here! During the week in Skegness the group ministered in some of the small group and outreach venues by singing and sharing and just visiting with the people, who found them charming! They also worked on the physical church building, sanding, cleaning, painting, and general slave labor.

We had a "history and culture day" as I call it, visiting Boston, a town about 25 miles Southwest of Skegness, from which the "Pilgrim Fathers," as they are called, launched their boat to escape religious persecution in 1607. There is a monument memorializing that event, museums, and special aspects of the parish church, St. Boltoph's, all with close ties to the Pilgrims who became the first European Americans. We attended a Christian stage performance group's (think, AD Players) presentation of The Cross and the Switchblade in Louth, an historic market town northwest of Skegness.

The hallmark of this group was "flexibility" - they did whatever we asked them to do without complaining and with cheerful hearts. The three girls were housed with a retired English couple and got a full dose of "English-ness," in which they delighted. The leaders and Michael stayed in the Manse with us, so only got American-English! We introduced them to several new foods, which they will most likely NOT try to find when they are at home, and introduced the British teenagers to "S'mores" which they WILL try to find here! On the final Saturday we had a "cookout" for all the kids here at the manse and they all had a great time in fellowship. We are praying that several of these local kids will be more influenced to explore real Christianity now that they've seen it in action and in truth. And the older church members and members of the community have been challenged and motivated by the energy and attitude they witnessed in this team. God has truly blessed us with a "little team from a little Texas church ministering to a little, out-of-the-way English town" in a big way!

Chuck, please add this bit about the kids singing at the Tower Gardens event on Sunday the 8th. It was another of those "little things with a big potential impact." Thanks!

On Sunday afternoon, 8 June, the team sang at a community Praise and Worship event held annually in the Skegness town park, called Tower Gardens. Both local newspapers were there to interview the team and take photos. We had many very encouraging comments from that event.