



East Midland Baptist Association

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

A review of our life together as an Association
of Baptist Churches in the East Midlands

Presented to the EMBA Gathering on 29 June 2024

East Midland Baptist Association

Registered Charity Number: 1094457 Registered Company Number: 4302466

Registered Office: EMBA Office, c/o West Bridgford Baptist Church, Melton Road,
West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7NF

Contents

EMBA Staff Team (<i>to 31 December 2023</i>).....	3
EMBA Board of Directors	3
Report of the EMBA Directors.....	4
East Midland Baptist Trust Company (EMBTC)	6
EMBTC Small Building Project Grants.....	7
Rooted.....	8
Re:imagine.....	8
EMBA Children, Young People and Families (CYF)	9
EMBA Ministry Recognition Committee (MRC).....	10
Grants Group.....	10
Safeguarding.....	11
EMBA Associates for Training: Revd Elaine Burrows and Revd Nick Swanson.....	12
Gracious Conversations Series	12
EMBA Ministers’ Conference	13
Refresh Women’s Conference.....	13
EMBA Retired Baptist Ministers’ Network (RBMN).....	14
BUEN: Baptist Union Environment Network.....	15
Welcome to new EMBA ministers.....	16
Welcome to new churches.....	17
Ministerial Recognition	17
Finance review	18
Making donations.....	18
EMBA Working Groups.....	19
Contacting the Association Team.....	20

EMBA Staff Team *(to 31 December 2023)*

Regional Ministers

Revd Mark Clay – Regional Team Leader (RTL)

Revd Dr Nick Ashton

Revd Mike Fegredo

Mrs Becky Nicholls – Admin Lead and PA to Regional Team Leader

Mrs Gill McNab – Admin Assistant

Mr Kenny Henry – Safeguarding Lead *(Appointed November 2023)*

EMBA Board of Directors

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Regional Team Leader:	Revd Mark Clay	
Treasurer:	Mr Andy Smallridge	Melton Mowbray BC, Leics

ELECTED MEMBERS

Moderator:	Revd David Harvey	Belper BC, Derbys
	Revd Hannah Colk	Robert Hall Memorial BC, Leics
	Mrs Ellie Cox	Oadby BC, Leics
	Revd Sam Hackett	Ruddington BC, Notts <i>(until June 2023)</i>
	Revd Martin Hills	Oundle BC, Peterborough
	Revd Matt Jones	Westdale Lane BC, Notts
	Mrs Kay McManus	New Day BC, Morton, Lincs
	VACANCY	

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

NONE

NON-VOTING MEMBER

Company Secretary:	Mrs Becky Nicholls
--------------------	--------------------

At the General Meeting as part of the 2024 EMBA Gathering there will be six vacancies on the EMBA board of Directors.

Report of the EMBA Directors



Objectives and Activities

The objects of this charitable company are the advancement of the Christian faith, particularly across the East Midlands and especially by the means of and in accordance with the principles of the Baptist denomination as set out for the time being in the Declaration of Principle of the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB).

The charitable company exists as a network of churches seeking to serve God's kingdom, led by the Holy Spirit, enabling all to do everything possible to fulfil God's apostolic mission and ministry within the communities in which they are placed. The charitable company believe that the local church is the primary way in which God's apostolic mission is fulfilled and as such, healthy churches are crucial to seeing God at work across the region. The trustees of the charitable company are committed to growing healthy churches through inspiring, equipping, pioneering, caring and partnering. These five priorities guide the work of the charitable company.

The principle activities of the charitable company are the employment of a Regional Ministry and administrative staff team and the organisation of a number of volunteers, working in groups or individually, to offer support and guidance, training and financial resources to advance the Christian faith in a way which benefits Baptist churches and the communities they serve.

The charitable company is part of the family of Baptist organisations serving the needs of many of the Baptist churches in Great Britain, working particularly closely with the Baptist Union of Great Britain and BMS World Mission.

Achievements and Performance

At a Special General Meeting held alongside the AGM on 24 June 2023, delegates approved and adopted revised Articles of Association. This following extensive consultation with the churches. The EMBA Gathering on 29 June 2024 and the election of Directors is being organised based on these revised Articles. Notwithstanding the increased use of digital communications and decision making, the Association recognises the vital importance of creating opportunities for churches to gather for worship, to hear inspiring speakers, and to share experiences and fellowship. This will be in addition to the many gatherings associated with training for ministers and church leaders.

As a further part of the ongoing Strategic Review of the Association, the Directors determined a revised staffing structure for the Association. The Directors made a conscious decision to

invest in staffing to augment the support the Association gives to churches and ministers. It was agreed that as Mike Fegredo retired from his post as Regional Minister, he should be replaced by a full time Regional Minister who would be a generalist to support Ministers and churches, but with a significant part of his time being devoted to developing leadership within the Region. Rev Pete Leveson is now in post appointed with effect from 1 February 2024. In partnership with the Yorkshire Baptist Association and St Hild College, investment in the development of a pipeline for Baptist leaders and ministers for the north has been agreed.

It was also agreed that a Safeguarding Lead would be appointed and Kenny Henry took up this role with effect from November 2023. The role of Communications Lead continues to be done on a consultancy basis for the time being by Revd Sarah Fegredo bringing fresh energy and insight to this area of Association life.

Churches will be aware of the significant issues affecting the Baptist family during 2023 and 2024, including consultation on accreditation issues for those in same sex marriage, a major financial review of how the Baptist Union and Associations can increase income to match expenditure, and the outcome of several years' work in relation to the challenges faced by women in ministry and leadership (Project Violet). Most of this work will continue beyond the period covered by this Annual Review. We are grateful for the engagement by churches, ministers, and church leaders in these important matters. Our hope and prayer is that whatever differences may be expressed, churches within the Baptist family will continue to enjoy fellowship and work together for the growth of God's Kingdom through growing healthy churches and pioneering projects.

The Directors express sincere thanks to the Staff Team. We rejoice that Mark Clay came through heart surgery successfully and is now back at work. Our thanks to Mike, Nick, Becky, and Gill, Andy our Treasurer and Irene our Bookkeeper, and Sarah on Communications. During Mark's absence, the Team willingly and capably took on a lot of extra work. The Directors and Staff Team continue to look for innovative ways to engage with and draw on the skills and experience of Regional Associates, ministers, church leaders, and the many retired ministers in our region. We are grateful for all the work done on a voluntary basis by so many.

In March we said goodbye to Mike Fegredo leaving us after 12 years as a Regional Minister. It was good to celebrate him at the Minister's Conference in February and at a gathering at West Bridgford Baptist Church on 16 March. Mike brought vision, enthusiasm, hard work, humility and deep spirituality to the role. He will be missed by the Regional Team and by the churches and ministers he built relationships with.

My thanks to all the Directors serving faithfully and bringing wise counsel during a challenging time. Revd Hannah Colk, Mrs Ellie Cox, Revd Martin Hills, and Revd Matt Jones have completed their first 3-year term of office and are eligible for re-election. Mrs Kay McManus and I continue as Directors alongside Revd Mark Clay and Mr Andy Smallridge (Treasurer).

The Directors encourage you to pray for the Staff Team on a regular basis. We are always keen to hear from those who have a passion to see God's Kingdom grow and have some skills and time available. Please contact any of the Directors or Regional Ministers.



Revd David Harvey
Moderator of the EMBA board of Directors



East Midland Baptist Trust Company (EMBTC)

Purpose Statement

The [East Midland Baptist Trust Company \(EMBTC\)](#) primarily acts as 'Custodian Trustee' for many EMBA churches. In addition, it has responsibility for advising congregations on property related matters; the maintenance of burial grounds arising from 'closed' churches; and the consideration of Small Building Project Grant (SBPG) applications from EMBA churches.

Achievements and Performance

2023 has seen a number of changes related to the work of the EMBTC. The Board itself has remained unchanged meeting regularly both virtually and in person. We are grateful to our own Becky Nicholls and Sally Spicer and Tim Chowns of the Baptist Union Corporation (BUC) for their support in preparing the agenda.

We have continued to seek to simplify the work of the EMBTC. Previously, we managed investments with Charles Stanley for a number of EMBA churches. Under Tim Johnson's guidance the assets were transferred into BUC deposit accounts. We have also managed to resolve a number of matters relating to very small charities which caused an inordinate amount of work.

The Board has continued to support the churches of the Association with regard to property and legal matters related to Trust deeds and to applications for BUC loans, as well as assisting those churches which are closing to resolve legal and financial matters, a sad but necessary task. It would greatly facilitate our work if those churches considering closure would speak to their Regional Minister so that all the necessary legal work can be completed in a timely manner. We are grateful to the BUC staff at Didcot, in particular Tim Chowns for their support. Chris Jones took over as CEO of the Support Services Team at Didcot. We were sorry to say goodbye to Caroline Sanderson, General Counsel, at Didcot as she moved to Tearfund. Listed church buildings present challenges from time to time and we have been well supported by the augmented BU Listed Buildings team.

As EMBTC Moderator, I sit on the BUC Board and recently took on the role of Moderator. I also participate in meetings with other Trust company secretaries. Both these activities are invaluable in providing early warning on changes in the law relevant to our churches.

Churches should be aware that there are a number of issues relating to the new Charities Law as well as Equality and Housing Acts. Churches that hire their premises to outside organisations are strongly advised to adopt an Ethos Statement. Please see documents LC09 on the BU website for details where you can also find advice on these other matters. These leaflets are regularly reviewed and updated and church secretaries should ensure they are familiar with them.

Most recently, we purchased a property for Pete Leveson, our new RM. We wish Pete and Suzie a warm welcome to the East Midlands and pray he will find a home with us. We thank Mike Fegredo for all his service and sage advice and wish him well in retirement.

The EMBTC remains on a firm financial foundation and we look forward to supporting the churches in 2024-5. Our prayer is that the resources we hold and the expertise available may be used by the churches of the East Midlands to grow the Kingdom in new and imaginative ways to God's glory.

Dr Chris Hanning (EMBTC Moderator)

EMBTC Small Building Project Grants

The East Midland Baptist Trust Company (EMBTC) established the [Small Building Project Grant fund](#) to support EMBA churches in the maintenance, renewal and development of their church buildings.

During 2023, EMBTC have awarded five Small Building Project Grants to assist with the following projects:

- **Buckminster Road Baptist Church, Leicester** – Refurbishment of three rooms for community use.
- **Central Baptist Church, Leicester** – Garden project.
- **Market Bosworth Free Church, Leicestershire** – Damp proofing course.
- **Melton Mowbray Baptist Church, Leicestershire** – Community Church Garden.
- **Swanwick Baptist Church, Derbyshire** – re-roofing, replacing entrance door, insulation and damp proofing.

Rooted

[Rooted](#) is the EMBA's commitment to equip ministers and leaders for contemporary ministry and to help churches engage in mission and ministry in our ever-changing world. Themed days (usually two or three) are held each year that provide an opportunity to reflect theologically and practically on a particular aspect of ministry. The day is broadly aimed at either Ministers and Pastors (Rooted for Ministers), wider church leadership teams, including ministers and pastors (Rooted for Leaders), or open to everyone (Rooted for Everyone). We aim to make the days as practical as possible with subjects covered that stimulate our thinking in mission and ministry.



In early March 2023, we were delighted to have Corin Pilling, UK Director for Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries, UK (<https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/uk/>), join us and lead a day for ministers on ministerial sustainability and well-being, and then in November, Simon Clay, Minister in Training at Whetstone BC, led a day on the theme of transforming and going deeper in worship.

All sessions are delivered free of charge to EMBA churches, and we are always happy to receive suggestions for topics or themes to be explored.

Re:imagine

Our second cohort of Re:imagine started in March 2022, and concluded in October 2023 with the participating church leadership teams exploring a final session of what it means to be a missional church.

Re:imagine takes participating churches through a two-year learning and development process (meeting roughly every six months) and encourages leadership teams to reflect on areas of culture, leadership, discipleship and mission so that they are better equipped to engage with the communities they are part of and be kingdom focused churches.



We are currently recruiting churches for a third cohort to start later in 2024. So, if your church would be interested in joining, or you would simply like to find out a bit more information about what is involved, please speak to your regional minister, contact the EMBA Office or visit the [EMBA website](#), and we would be happy to explore Re:imagine with you.

EMBA Children, Young People and Families (CYF)

The last year has seen CYF activity in a number of areas:

- Representing EMBA at the National CYF Round Table in November 2023.
 - In November Rev Dr Linda Hopkins shared the results of her research into children's experiences of communion in Baptist churches.
 - Following on from this, Linda is visiting the EMBA in April 2024 delivering a day of training and reflection on hearing the voice of the child in Baptist contexts as part of the Rooted programme.
 - The next CYF round table is meeting in April 2024.



Future Work: The CYF Round Table has entered a partnership with [Youthscape Essentials](#) so that associations can deliver the Essentials course to volunteers in churches at zero cost to the churches. The EMBA is part of this project. We hope to have a plan for this delivery in Autumn 2024.

I am still talking to churches about the challenges of recruiting qualified youth workers, and children's workers. Many of us in the field recognise that the poor career structure and remuneration means that workers choose ordained ministry instead as housing is provided and stipends keep pace with inflation. Even more worryingly some are choosing other denominations where packages are more attractive – this means that gifted CYF workers are being lost to adult ministry. Training organisations are struggling to recruit students because of this. Having said that, some Baptist churches are doing their best, including by offering scholarships to students to study CYF ministry. This is a worrying development when viewed alongside our aging congregations who may have a heart to welcome younger generations but don't feel confident or equipped to minister to those who may be several generations younger than themselves.

I have spent some time this past year supporting and advising churches and individuals about employment situations. I have identified a need for some training for ministers and deacons in the management and supervision of staff teams, especially staff members who are qualified, in the area of good HR practice.

Revd Sarah Fegredo, EMBA CYF Associate

EMBA Ministry Recognition Committee (MRC)

The Ministry Recognition Committee primarily works with those who are exploring a call to ministry across the EMBA.

In 2023 we had the privilege of meeting with four individuals who were exploring a call to accredited ministry. One was exploring a call to be an accredited pastor, and three were exploring a call to be a fully accredited minister with the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Of these three, one was already undertaking training at College, one was looking to go to college in 2024, and one was a reinstatement to the accredited list following a return to the United Kingdom. The MRC were delighted to commend all four to the Baptist Union.

In November 2023, the EMBA joined with the Yorkshire Baptist Association and with St Hild College to host an online 'explore your call event' for individual's we are in the early stages of asking what God might be asking of them, and whether this might include some form of ministerial formation.

MRC is comprised of representatives from the regional team, EMBA ministers, and others who have been appointed by our churches. We are grateful for the work and time that they give to this group.

Grants Group

Whilst we recognise the ongoing financial challenges faced by our Baptist Family, we continue to give thanks to God for his generous provision and the faithful giving of many of our EMBA churches to Home Mission. Your generous giving as churches and individuals continues to support the ongoing work of our Baptist Family nationally, regionally and locally. In 2023, EMBA were able to continue to fund three Mission Grants and two Pioneer Mission Grants to support church and pioneer ministry and two EMBA ministers-in-training with Minister-in-Training Training Grants (MITTG).

Our thanks go to all members of the EMBA Grants Group who give of their time to review a considerable amount of paperwork for each and every grant application submitted and carefully discern the grant to be awarded. The Regional Team are appreciative of the time commitment given and for the insights and reflections of the wider group. Particular thanks to Revd Sam Hackett for his contribution and service on the Grants Group over a number of years as he steps down from this role and moves to new ministry outside of the EMBA. During the course of the year we were pleased to welcome Pastor David Howe who joined the group and we would ask for your continued prayers for the Regional Team and Directors as they seek new people with their different skills and giftings to participate in the many areas of Association life.

In recent months, the Regional Team have undertaken a review of the mission grant and pioneer mission grant criteria, process and requirements. The outcome of the review has

been the creation of a new Grant; a Mission Partnership Grant, available to help a Baptist Church, pioneering ministry or ecumenical partnership including Baptists, to engage effectively in mission by supporting a minister, minister in training, or other worker. At the heart of the Mission Partnership Grant (MPaG) is a more active approach involving genuine partnership between each grant recipient and the EMBA, mainly expressed through a Mission Accompanier (MA) who will journey with the ministry throughout the grant period. The grant aims to encourage and support a ministry to become thoroughly missional in nature, to foster accountability and also increase the likelihood of long term financial sustainability.

If as a church you are considering a new mission opportunity but finance is an issue, we would strongly encourage you to take a look at the different grants available on the [EMBA website](#) or talk to your Regional Minister.

Safeguarding

As followers of Christ we have a Gospel responsibility to ensure that we are giving of our very best to all those we welcome amongst us and that we do so within an atmosphere of safety and security. During the past year we have



continued to see a high demand for safeguarding training and it has been encouraging to see several of our churches reaching out and seeking Association support with safeguarding policy and practice that have not previously. During the past year we have also sought to improve the safeguarding training booking process; the move to online bookings and payments using ChurchSuite having created a much easier and simpler administrative process for everyone. A total of 52 trainings were held during 2023 (32 Level Two trainings and 20 Level Three trainings) resulting in over 1000 ministers, leaders and church workers receiving training across our region! Further information about safeguarding trainings can be found on the [EMBA website](#).

A huge thank you to all our safeguarding trainers and to Alan Davies (EMBA Safeguarding Adviser and trainer) who continue to give of their time and expertise to support this valuable area of work provided by the Association. We are very grateful to Mrs Sarah Jones who was already a Level 2 trainer and has now undertaken the BUGB train the trainers training to become a Level 3 trainer as well. The Association was also delighted to announce the appointment of Mr Kenny Henry as our first paid Safeguarding Lead for the Association. Kenny joined the Regional Team and commenced this new role in November 2023. Initially, Kenny has focused on the safeguarding case file and assisting churches with safeguarding concerns but over the coming year, he will also be taking over all of the safeguarding administration. The Association are immensely grateful to Mrs Becky Nicholls who as part of her role as Admin Lead, has managed the safeguarding administration and training over a number of years. Going forward, Becky will be taking on additional PA responsibilities for Revd Mark Clay (RTL).

During the year, we were pleased to be able to resource those in our churches who have taken on the role of Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS). In July we were joined by Rachel Stone and Nicky Gibbard from the National Safeguarding Team who led a training day specifically for Church DPS's. The day was well attended and received significant positive feedback, with DPS's reporting feeling supported, encouraged and better equipped in their role going forward. The Association hope to provide an annual training day for DPS's with plans underway for another event in the Autumn of 2024.

Please do continue to uphold our EMBA Safeguarding Team as well as the National Safeguarding Team in your prayers as they continue to resource our churches in this vitally important aspect of church life.

For help and support with safeguarding in your church please contact [Kenny Henry](#) (EMBA Safeguarding Lead).

EMBA Associates for Training: Revd Elaine Burrows and Revd Nick Swanson

Nick and Elaine continue to serve the EMBA as [Associate Trainers](#), working alongside the Regional Ministers in delivering training across the region.

As part of the EMBA's 'Gracious Conversations Series' held in March / April both Elaine and Nick led two of the training sessions – 'Facilitating Fruitful Conversation' and 'Church Conversations - practical models'.

Going forward there are plans to deliver the CPAS Growing Leaders Course, which aims to help develop emerging and existing leaders. This course focuses on the characteristics and skills of Christian leadership and combines teaching, mentoring and practical application.

There is also the potential to deliver the popular Pastoral Care course again. This has been revised to reflect the significant impact of the Pandemic on pastoral care, along with an additional session on Mental Health.

Please get in touch with [Nick and Elaine](#) to enquire about training courses or to discuss any specific training needs you have.

Gracious Conversations Series

During 2023 the EMBA has run a number of training courses aiming to educate, train, equip and inspire our churches. Significantly in the spring we ran a series of courses entitled Gracious Conversations. This series of three events was provided to help our churches and ministers to think through the issues of human sexuality in a biblical, theological, missiological and pastoral way and was prompted by the BU consultation.

The events were well attended and characterised by a clear demonstration of grace and willingness to wrestle with the issues raised.

EMBA Ministers' Conference

I think most would agree that this year's [EMBA Ministers' Conference](#) was a "wonderful, inspiring, challenging and encouraging time together".

Our keynote speaker Revd Dr Kate Coleman challenged us to transform leadership from a personal, missional, systemic and global perspective. Revd Sam Dunn and team led us wonderfully in sung worship as we celebrated God at work across the Association. So many people contributed to our time together in special ways, a highlight being Revd Ingrid Shelley sharing stories from her chaplaincy in prisons and hospice care, seeing God's light pouring through the broken cracks of lives in very dark places.



There is a growing sense among ministers that the conference is drawing us closer together and is a significant time for us in our ministries. Let me encourage ministers and churches to invest in these days as a priority for challenging, refreshing, learning and enabling that will have an impact back home in our churches.

Revd Gill Isterling (Conference Coordinator)

Refresh Women's Conference

We continue to be excited and encouraged by the growth and development of [Refresh Women's conference](#).



On March 11th 2023 we were at Mansfield Baptist church; over 130 women gathered from around 35 churches. Rosie Bunker a church leader in Nottingham spoke on the subject of shame and focussed on Genesis 3 and Dianne Tidball spoke on a renewed mind from Romans 12:1-2. There was interactive prayer; a group Bible study on "taking every thought captive to Christ" from Colossians as well as the regular 'warm up' and the fantastic

Refresh worship leaders, Kate, Rachel and Sarah. Many women received prayer and we were

encouraged by how the use of Scripture prophetically spoke movingly to many women and their particular situations.

Our second conference in 2023 was in Whetstone, Leicestershire and to our amazement we had to close bookings at 230; so many women appreciated the joy, energy and support that the day offered. Anne Calver who heads up “Unleashed” was inspirational and challenging as she spoke on Deborah and Jael. She used personal stories to remind us that God is always wanting to use us and we need to wake up to the opportunities and possibilities around us. Women came from around the Association as well as further afield.



Revd Dianne Tidball (Refresh Coordinator)

EMBA Retired Baptist Ministers’ Network (RBMN)



Around 90 Baptist Ministers have “retired” in the East Midlands. A clear pattern for our Retired Ministers’ Network has now emerged. Some of us prefer to meet by Zoom only, some enjoy both Zoom and in-person gatherings, some engage only very occasionally, and some not at all. It has been good, in 2023, to see many of these Ministers, long or more recently retired, supporting our gatherings.

Our **Lent Gathering** – ‘Lent and Dissent’ – was led by Revd Dr Sally Nelson (St Hild’s) on Thursday 30 March via Zoom. Dissent can be helpfully seen as solidarity with those who are marginalised, Sally suggested. In her reflection Dr Nelson explored “wilderness” with us exploring this as a prophetic space, where the disciplines of attention and an appropriate indifference to things that distract from a gospel calling can develop. Lent, she suggested, gives us new insights into what it means to be a “Dissenter” and into solidarity with those that many, but never God, dismiss as “poor”. Her talk can still be accessed on the EMBA YouTube website: <https://youtu.be/WBMOtZ19Fn0?si=Z0sv4qBllufA03Wn>

Our **Summer Gathering** with Revd Prof. Philip McCormack (Principal of Spurgeon’s College) was held in person at West Bridgford Baptist Church on Tuesday 13 June. Those of us present heard Philip reflect on Ephesians 3 v 14-20 and ‘The Courage to Imagine’. As part of this exposition we learned of some of the exciting developments in Spurgeon’s as plans for the College to become Croydon’s first home grown University advance. It was also good to hear more of the College’s partnership with Rick Warren who had recently accepted the role of the College’s first honorary Chancellor. The lunch provided for us all by the EMBA Team was as usual generous, varied and delicious! Prof McCormack’s afternoon session – in which he

reflected on his personal life and ministry journey – was for many of us the highlight of a great day. This session was called: ‘Shipyard Man to Vice Chancellor’.

Our **Advent Gathering** on December 7th via Zoom was, as has become our pattern, rooted in a book. For several years now the EMBA have gifted a chosen book in the Autumn to those Retired Ministers in our Region who would like a copy. This year’s choice was David Coffey’s fascinating *Around the World in 80 Ways: A Life of Ministry*. Several of us already had copies, and a further 30 or so were sent out in preparation for this meeting. An introductory review of the book, two “breakout room” sessions, and a plenary formed the heart of the morning’s meeting. One of the quotes in his book – attributed to Billy Graham – proved a focus for much of our discussion: “I know how to die but no-one ever taught me how to grow old”. David’s book concludes with some reflections on Psalm 71 and on exactly that - ‘Growing Old with God’. It was especially pleasing to welcome the author himself to join us in person for the plenary! David had previously welcomed comments and observations on his book – critical or complimentary - and was then with us to hear and respond to them. The morning ended with David leading us in an Advent reflection and prayer.

In September our **RBMN planning group meeting** was held - again in person – at the EMBA Offices, with Becky Nicholls representing Mark Clay at this meeting. We continue to try to develop more local gatherings for Retired Ministers (who opt into them) here in the EMBA. Updates were heard from Ron Day (Rutland and Leicestershire), Clive Doubleday (Peterborough), David Luce (Nottinghamshire 1), Dick Prior (Nottinghamshire 2), Nic Hasnip (Lincolnshire), and (by email) Revd Jane Webb (Derbyshire).

In closing I wish to reiterate that the Network would not be happening at all without the continuing affirmation and support of Mark Clay, his PA Becky Nicholls, and the EMBA team. We remain grateful to them all for this.

Revd Michael I Bochenski (EMBA – RBMN Coordinator)

BUEN: Baptist Union Environment Network

The latest IPCC report delivers a ‘final warning’ on the climate crisis, saying ‘act now, or it’s too late’. Tom Rivett-Carnac, a former UN adviser who worked on the 2015 Paris climate agreement, says ‘We need to use all platforms and angles that we can to realise the unique nature of this moment, and the privilege to be here and have the chance to make a difference.’ This is the attitude BUEN is encouraging churches to take.



Over the past year the Midlands hub of BUEN has been working across EMBA, HEBA and nationally to support churches to care for God’s creation. Since its launch in 2021, the BUEN Midlands network has now grown to around 80 people representing over 45 churches in the

midlands. From amplifying campaigns like JPIT's 'Net Zero in my Neighbourhood' and Tearfund's 'Time to Deliver', to sharing ideas and expertise between churches, the network has been raising awareness of what churches can practically do to respond to the climate crisis and why it is part of our God-given mission to do so. Fixing solar panels to buildings, leading Climate Sunday services, putting on litter picks, setting up community gardens, partnering with local government and MPs to influence new policies, petitioning and tree planting – these are just some of the actions churches in EMBA have taken.

Look out for BUEN at the 2024 Baptist Assembly! We can also help your church if you are looking for a speaker on creation care or thinking about running an event or church service about climate change.

To get involved with EMBA BUEN or to know more, please visit the [EMBA website](#).

Welcome to new EMBA ministers

Those in ministry who we have welcomed into the Association during 2023 are:

Jason Kennedy (Enabling Minister at Haven Christian Centre, Derbys)

Duncan Keys (Desford Free Church and Market Bosworth Free church, Leics)

Rob McGibbon (Grantham BC, Lincs)

Rachel Malyk (Hathern BC, Leics)

Michael Peat (Loughborough BC, Leics)

Daniel Pollin (Lincoln BC, Lincs)

Karl Relton (Lubbesthorpe Alive, Leics)

Richard Sherlock (Burgh BC, Lincs)

Steve Watson (Community Chaplain,
Beeston BC, Notts)



Welcome to new churches

We are delighted to have welcomed **Christ Victory Baptist Church, Nottingham** into membership of the Association and Baptist Union.



Ministerial Recognition

Fully Accredited Baptist Minister (FAM)

Having successfully completed their Newly Accredited Minister (NAM) studies the following ministers transferred to the Fully Accredited Baptist Minister list in 2023:

Revd Christopher Brown (Market Harborough BC, Leics)

Revd Leigh Greenwood (Stoneygate BC, Leics)

Revd Susy Insley (Hospital Chaplain)

Revd Simon Robinson (Watnall Road BC, Notts)



National Recognition as a Pastor (NRPa)

Pastor Liz Connelly (Pastor at Barlestone BC, Leicestershire)

Finance review

Home Mission giving continues to be a concern for both EMBA and the wider Baptist family.

It is suggested that churches should give around 5% of their income to Home Mission. Sadly, many either can't or don't and the result is that EMBA in common with the other Associations is running a sizeable deficit, being met by reserves.

Last year this deficit amounted to some £91,000. Early in the year, because Home Mission giving nationally failed to hit target in 2022, each Association had to pay back the excess funds paid to them. Our share amounted to some £30,000. It was decided that the shortfall for 2023 would be repaid during the year – again a similar amount – although some of this was subsequently returned to the Association at the beginning of 2024.

We also took the decision to place much of our balances into a 12 month deposit account with the Baptist Corporation, the first interest payment isn't due until later in 2024.

While this explains some of the excess of expenses over income as shown in the accounts, we are still faced with the situation that unless income increases the Association will have to reduce its activities and its cost base.

Nationally there is a Financial Review being carried out and this will, hopefully, mean that more of the monies given by EMBA churches remains within EMBA. That will give our member churches greater transparency and direction on how the money they give is spent.

Making donations

Where possible, if donations could be made by bank transfer or standing order this would be greatly appreciated and aid administrative processes.

To Home Mission

If you wish to send a cheque payment, please make the cheque payable to 'EMBA Home Mission' and send FAO Jack Liquorish, c/o EMBA Office, West Bridgford Baptist Church, Melton Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7NF.

All other donations to EMBA should be sent:

FAO Irene Milburn (EMBA Bookkeeper) c/o EMBA Office, West Bridgford Baptist Church, Melton Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7NF.

Please make the cheque payable to 'EMBA General A/C' and attach a covering note explaining what the payment is for.

EMBA Working Groups



East Midland Baptist Trust Company (EMBTC)

Chris Hanning (Moderator), Tim Jackson (EMBTC Treasurer), Gary Anderson

Grants Group

Sam Hackett, David Howe, Sue Hensby, Graham Watkins

Ministerial Recognition Committee (MRC)

Colin Bowden, Ellie Cockbill, Christine Cook, Gert Glasius, Jon Grant, Chandra Morbey, Richard Nicholls, Ruth Tiso

Ministers' Conference Planning Group

Gill Isterling (Coordinator), Tom Cox (Treasurer), Rashell Beya, Christopher Brown, Sam Dunn, Sarah Fegredo, Jon Grant

Refresh (Women Conference)

Dianne Tidball (Coordinator), Vivienne Edwards, Margaret Hanning, Sarah Liquorish, Linda Patel

Retired Baptist Ministers' Network (RBMN) Planning Team

Michael Bochenski (Coordinator), Ron Day, Clive Doubleday, Arderne Gillies, Nic Hasnip, David Luce, Dick Prior, Jane Webb

Safeguarding Team

Dave Bedford, Clare Blain, Elaine Burrows, Alan Davies, Sarah Fegredo, Sarah Jones, Malcolm Grimley, Kenny Henry, Paul Muir, Helen Parker, Amanda Tasker

**And to all who support
the work of the Association**

THANK YOU





Contacting the Association Team

EMBA Staff Team

Admin Lead and PA to RTL

Mrs Becky Nicholls Tel: 07763 401 793 Email: becky.nicholls@embaptists.org.uk

Admin Assistant

Mrs Gill McNab Tel: 07483 119 627 Email: gill.mcnab@embaptists.org.uk

Communications Lead

Revd Sarah Fegredo Tel: 07926 456 765 Email: sarah.fegredo@embaptists.org.uk

Safeguarding Lead

Mr Kenny Henry Tel: 07498 189 205 Email: kenny.henry@embaptists.org.uk

Regional Ministers

Revd Mark Clay – Regional Team Leader (RTL)

Tel: 07975 863 772 Email: mark.clay@embaptists.org.uk

Revd Dr Nick Ashton

Tel: 07399 660 047 Email: nick.ashton@embaptists.org.uk

Revd Pete Leveson

Tel: 07950 768 332 Email: pete.leveson@embaptists.org.uk

Wider EMBA Team

EMBA Treasurer: Mr Andy Smallridge

Email: andy.smallridge@embaptists.org.uk

Bookkeeper: Ms Irene Milburn

Email: irene.milburn@embaptists.org.uk

EMBTC Treasurer: Mr Tim Jackson

Email: tim.jackson@embaptists.org.uk

Data Protection Officer: Mr Garry Clewlow

Email: dpo@embaptists.org.uk

Home Mission Administrator: Mr Jack Liquorish

Email: jack.liquorish@embaptists.org.uk

EMBA Associates

People recognised and endorsed by the Association in offering specific skills and experience to the churches of the EMBA (largely in a voluntary capacity) thereby expanding the capacity of the Regional Team.

Children, Young People and Families (CYF): Revd Sarah Fegredo

Church Development: Revd Graham Dunn

Ministerial Development: Revd Nick Swanson

Pioneering Support: Revd Sue Steer

Spiritual Accompaniment: Revd Stephen Ibbotson

Training: Revd Elaine Burrows and Revd Nick Swanson