

## **Nominations to the Leadership Team**

We can have up to twelve people on the church's Leadership Team. They serve as our Trustees and Deacons. The Leadership currently comprises:

1. Jenni Beesley (Church Secretary)
2. Rachel Conway-Doel
3. Steve Drury
4. Chrysie Gerald
5. Ewan McIntosh (Treasurer)
6. Becky Reames
7. Pearl Sheckleford
8. Alison Sherwood
9. Seanie Smith-Inniss
10. Paula Warren

With Alison Sherwood now concluding her term, this time we have three vacancies.

Having asked the church membership who you think should be considered, three Church Members have been nominated to serve on the Leadership Team. They are: Jon Alsop; Lucy Brockbank; Wendy Sharples. You can read their profiles here.

### **Jonathan Alsop**

I have been part of Chester Road Baptist church for about 3-4 years, married to Suzanne, the under 5's worker here and we have two children, Elijah and Abigail.

I would say that I have been a Christian most of my life, though for several years my faith was quite minimal, until I re-committed in 2008 and got baptised in 2009. For me, being a Christian is an ongoing journey, a work in progress. It's not about being in a state of having all the answers and just settling. I believe that it's important to continue to work on my faith, to challenge it. Through this I have found that my faith has grown.

I moved to Birmingham about 20 years ago, but I'm originally from the south west. I came here to start a job as a Quality Engineer and have been at the same place since! I work in a manufacturing firm that produces metal alloy for the aerospace industry, so for most of the week I am part of a busy shop floor environment, mixing with all sorts of interesting people. My work environment seems a million miles away from my faith and church life sometimes. A big challenge for me as always is to bring my walk with God into every part of my life.

I have become involved with the worship group in the last year or so. I also attend Wednesday early bird prayers most weeks, where we set aside time to pray for our community, our friends, our family and church members. It's an important time to focus on God and to bring him into the centre of our day

### **Lucy Brockbank**

Hi Chester Road family, if you don't know me already my name is Lucy Brockbank. You may have seen me around hosting, serving tea/coffee or a cooked breakfast. I have been a part

of Chester Road Baptist church for the past 9 years (Yes, back when we had wooden pews and no appointed minister) and became a member of the church at the same time as Danny.

I was raised in churches, from Baptist, Evangelical and Pentecostal and was baptised at the age of 15 (just round the corner on Goosemoor Lane), where I first met my partner Jon. We have 3 children Kieran, Annabelle and Sebastian. You may have joined me and my family in celebrating Annabelle's baptism here recently as she grows in her faith journey.

As far as work goes, my background has been in primary schools as a teaching assistant and then a family support worker for the charity Home-Start UK. Currently we run our own business called Outracking Ltd, which supplies and installs racking for big warehouses like Amazon. This gives me the great privilege of working from home and spending as much time as I can with family.

From the moment I stepped into Chester Road Baptist church I have never felt more at home anywhere. The diversity of our church and acceptance of everyone is just wonderful to see. The small group on a Wednesday has been invaluable for support, friendship and prayers. (love you guys)

So, if you'll have me, I would love to be a part of helping our church grow even more 😊

## **Wendy Sharples**

I've been asked to write a pen portrait, not quite sure what that means, so to put Wendy into context, it might be easier to work backwards! I'm the one who sits at the back of the church on Sundays in order to beat a hasty retreat.

I came back to Chester Road around 2012/2013 just as my mum was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. She died in 2014.

I'd been volunteering at foodbank since its inception. We'd decided we'd extend foodbank by adding a job club, which I was all in favour of - retired teacher and all! For some inexplicable reason Danny asked me to join the one here. So the CRBC job club was created with Mike Miller, Ken Hawkings et moi. I followed that event by becoming a church member. Our job club has been supporting Timberley Lane Baptist Church with their Life Hub.

Originally I'd been at CRBC way back in the 1970's as part of the youth group when Gethin Abraham-Williams was the minister. It's far too complicated to explain why and how I joined the youth group, suffice to say the death of my sister, Maxine aged 6 was a major consideration. I was baptised here in 1971 and then decided to go to teacher's training college, which I did - miles away in Walsall!

From that point I never returned to CRBC. I taught for a while in Walsall and then went to London to teach in Walthamstow (the Kray twins country) whilst attending Bible College in Kennington. I was based at St Andrews Church in Ilford where, together with a band of 4 musicians, we were invited to a variety of churches in and around Essex, preaching and working with youth groups.

Returning to Brum in the 1980's I joined the GB, becoming both a company officer and the District Adjutant; based at a local baptist church where, unexpected and traumatic events rocked my world. At that point I decided church wasn't for me - Jesus - yes, but the institution, a loud resounding no.

I taught in Sparkhill at a large comprehensive school; I was the deputy headteacher. Teaching held all the challenges that impacts on young adults so no two days were ever the same. Aside from teaching, part of my responsibilities included staff well-being and dealing with naughty boys and girls, a job I thoroughly enjoyed.

Towards 2011 my mum became seriously unwell with her dementia, so I took early retirement and I felt I should give church another try. For whatever reason, there was a strong pull to CRBC. However, traumatic events leave deep scars so from kicking and screaming every Sunday, I'm now writing a pen portrait and still standing.

As with us all, there are strange confusing twists and turns that happen in our life journey; not knowing what the future holds and sometimes being held hostage to our past. Something I'm still wrestling with.

However, it maybe that some of my life experiences can be used at CRBC; so, bravely and audaciously personalising the words of the late great Arthur Ashe, "I'll start where I am. I'll use what I have. I'll do what I can." to hopefully support the present leadership team.

Thanks for taking the time to read.

Wendy Sharples - as in Ena, but not related to. And if you understand that, you're showing your age!