

Do you need a spiritual refit?



KBCTC. Just for young twenty-somethings 'with potential'? Or is it a valuable asset for training those already in leadership in our churches and communities? We asked Caroline Wadsworth to tell us her story...

My name is Caroline. I am a forty-something married woman with three teenage sons and I live in Basingstoke. I have been in BCC for over twenty years, during many of which we have had some leadership responsibilities and I have taught in the King's School, as well as being an active part of my local community in school governing, parish council, etc.

Why am I telling you all this? Well, this year I have had the privilege of being a student at KBCTC (something I have wanted to do since it was first established in Canada!) and now I have the opportunity to let you know something of what it has meant to me.

Oldest – by a long way!

While I am the oldest student by quite some years, I have loved being part of the KBCTC community, which is possibly the most inclusive and accepting Christian group I have ever known. The sense of togetherness was fostered by Simon and the staff from the moment we walked in the door

last September (much to my horror initially, we were challenged to be open and vulnerable from Day 1) and, as time has progressed, we have been taught to support each

active engagement
not passive learning

other through good times and bad. The emphasis is on discipleship rather than knowledge, on genuine learning not passive listening. Through the different settings – lectures, tutorials, community groups, seminars, principal times – we have faced up to our weaknesses, been surprised by our strengths and embraced what God is saying to us.

Not just a slogan!

“Think theologically, live reflectively and make a difference” is not just a slogan – it's worked out in each one of our lives! When I came to KBCTC, I had a pretty good store of biblical knowledge but I had some issues that had arisen which challenged that knowledge to the core. As I gave myself to study, to the teaching, to prayer, and to questioning all



**King's Bible College and Training Centre
A ministry of the Salt and Light
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Training people to think theologically, live reflectively
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a community of learning and discipleship at the heart of Salt & Light

my previous assumptions, I began to realise, like Job, just how big God is, that He will not necessarily answer my questions but that he is prepared to have a dialogue with me. Now, God is well and truly “out of the box” – He’s no longer limited in my mind by what I understand Him to be. As a result of this whole process, my faith has not been shaken to the ground (as I feared at times it would) but strengthened at its very foundations.

I can do all things!

Subsequently, in large part due to the trip we did to France, I have begun to understand that because God is unlimited, then so is His power in me. That means that I am not limited in what I can do for Him, in fact I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. That’s easy to say but I’ve begun to believe it! That has huge implications for a forty-something woman, who has for years set boundaries around what she would and wouldn’t be able to do for God. And that’s how theology makes a difference – theology affecting the thinking – the thinking affecting the living! Such a story could be repeated by each one of the current students. Not one of us is leaving this hot-house experience unchanged.

A great team!

That’s partly down to the sacrifice and commitment of the staff. I’m really grateful to Simon for his vision and belief in each of us; to Gaynor for her creativity and sense of fun; to Dave for his insight into, and clear communication of, the Word; to Velma for her constant care and understanding; to Ceri for her provocation; to Mary for her challenge and exhortation; to Alison for her counsel and

prayer; to Miriam for her encouragement and testimony and to Chris and Wendy for their kindness and dependability. They all have specific functions to perform, some work full-time, others part-time, others give their time on a voluntary basis, but each one gives themselves to support KBCTC’s vision and helps to make it the community it is.

Secondly, it’s down to the lecturers, such as Steve Thomas, Phil Norris, Tim Monger, Mike Beaumont, Aled Griffith and Tony Gray – as well as many many less well-known names – who not only share their biblical knowledge with us but also their life experiences, with all the highs and lows. In lectures, we’ve laughed together, debated issues, asked endless questions and been stirred to worship and prayer as God has simply overawed us with what we are learning about Him. On behalf of all the students, I’d like to thank them and honour them for all they have imparted to us.

Finally, it’s down to the community itself – the dynamics of living and working together.



We’ve had great fun: we’ve compiled books of dodgy quotes from the lecturers, played practical jokes on them and each other, cooked and eaten many meals together, and had parties of all shapes and sizes. We’ve also prayed, cried, worshipped, studied and climbed the odd mountain together. I think each one of us would say we couldn’t have done this year alone.

Learning for all

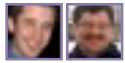
KBCTC is a community of learning and discipleship at the heart of Salt and Light. I believe it is for anyone, not just those who are fresh out of school or college, or for those who are young in the faith. All of us have issues in our lives that need addressing, all of us need a fuller understanding of God and all of us could benefit from being better equipped to do what God is asking us to do. It is a

my faith strengthened at its very foundations

big sacrifice – it costs money, time, and (as with all discipleship) it challenges our independence, our selfishness, our comfort. However, God is no man’s debtor and the benefits far outweigh the costs, not only for ourselves but also, hopefully, for our families, our churches, our employers and our communities.

Who’s who?

It goes without saying that, as with many of our local churches, KBCTC runs on a shoestring budget!

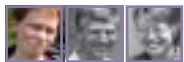


Simon Shaw
(Principal) and

Dave Perry (Dean of Theology) are employed full-time.



In addition, a number of people give them time voluntarily to the College including Mary Hipsley (Dean of Studies), Alison Bancroft (Pastoral Coordinator), Gaynor Shaw (Chapel Team), Velma Perry (Administration and hospitality) and Daniel Cooling (Administration).



The following are employed on a part-time basis: Ceri Rees (Administration Manager), Chris Byrne (Bursar) and Wendy Byrne (Librarian).

Tutors and lecturers from our family of churches give their time voluntarily to make KBCTC a truly unique experience.

Money. Family. Career. Choices. Life. So many things can get in the way of a life of discipleship. More stories from past students and the choices they made coming soon to www.kbctc.org/faq