

The magazine of the Barnsley Group Pastorate



**SPRING 2016**



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Dear friends

## MY SABBATICAL PLANS

As you may know I am taking a sabbatical from April 4<sup>th</sup> until July 4<sup>th</sup>. If you have any pastoral needs during this time please contact your elder.

A couple of years ago I was invited to India to see the free school which you will have read about in past LINK magazines. My sabbatical seemed a great opportunity to travel to India, meet with David and his family and join him in his works with the street kids in Tirupati in Southern India.



I will be flying from Manchester on Tuesday 5 April, stopping for three hours at Dubai airport and then on to Chennai (formerly Madras) where I will arrive at about 8.30am. David



is going to meet me at the airport from where we will get a taxi for the 100 mile trip to Tirupati.

I will be staying with

David and his family (above) rather than in a hotel. His kindness and generosity is fantastic.

Other than teaching in the school, David works with the street kids in what is a very important Hindu city. He also visits



kids who are in prison. He shares the Gospel with the children and brings some joy into their lives.

I will be with David in a purely observational role as I am only travelling on a tourist visa!

Towards the end of my stay David, his family and I are flying



to Delhi (a four hour flight) so that we can all visit the Taj Mahal in Agra. I will then fly home from Delhi (with another stop at Dubai) arriving back in Manchester on Friday 22 April.

I would like to thank all of those who have made a donation which I will take with me. It will be used to purchase



essential supplies (books etc) for the school and, hopefully, there will be some left over to buy little gifts for the street kids. I am still happy to accept

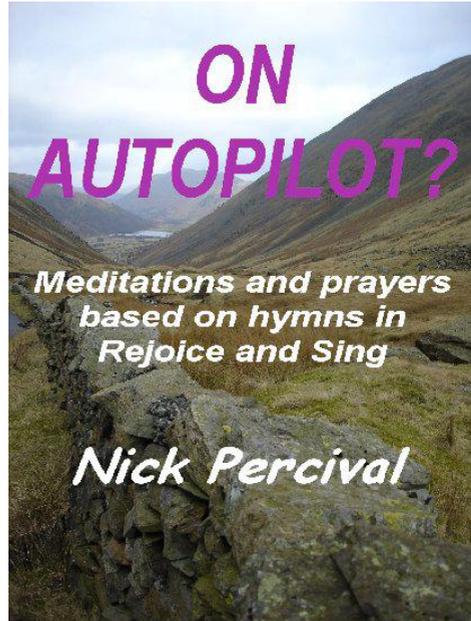
donations, if you would like to make one, or even another one, please make sure I receive it by Sunday 3 April. Thanks again for your wonderful generosity.

I have little idea what to expect in India. I know the temperature will be in the 30s. I have had various jabs at my medical centre and have got anti-



malaria tablets to take during my visit. A mosquito repellent spray is also required as is a plentiful supply of Imodium, just in case!

During the rest of my sabbatical I will be finishing volume two of *On Autopilot?* You may remember that I completed *On Autopilot?* (163 meditations) during my sabbatical in 2006. At the time I envisaged that that would be it. Since then, however, I have written another 111 meditations. I intend to write some more, hopefully bring the total to 300 (or more). I will then be 'hawking it' around publishers. If that is not fruitful I will publish it myself as a print to order book or as an eBook.



Your prayer support would be very welcome during my sabbatical. I look forward to telling you all about it later in the year.

Your friend and minister

*Nick*

(Cover photo: Sri Laxmi Narayani Golden Temple, Tirupati)

# Group Pastorate Services 2016

We meet together for worship, fellowship and food three times a year.

The services for 2016 are:

TRINITY - 20<sup>th</sup> MARCH

CLAYTON WEST - 10<sup>th</sup> JULY

WEST MELTON - 6<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER

*These services will start at 11.00am and will, as usual, be followed by a time of fellowship as we eat lunch together.*

**YOU ARE ALL WELCOME.**

**PLEASE PUT THESE DATES**  
**IN YOUR DIARY NOW**

# WEST MELTON'S GREEN TIPS CORNER

By Helen Owen

## Number 30 - STOP GARDEN POTS CRACKING

When the soil in your garden pots freezes in winter it



expands and can cause terracotta and ceramic pots to crack.

It's really easy to avoid this by raising the pots off the

ground so they can drain properly-- pieces of wood or "pot

feet" are ideal or bricks for larger pots.



### RECYCLING

Don't forget: You can take old

spectacles to your local optician;

Used postage stamps can be used to support McMillan Carer Support ( I have the address) or can be given to Joyce Jones for Bluebell Wood hospice.

Clean used polythene can be sent to a recycling firm in Norwich ( I have the address)

Old watches, mobiles, jewellery and printer ink cartridges can be given to me for sending on for recycling.



Below is a letter from Traidcraft.

Dear Friends

We wrote to you in June to share our current trading situation and how important it was for Traidcraft to have a strong Autumn season. In order to keep changing lives and keep fighting poverty through trade, we urgently needed your help. We also needed to turn people back to supporting you by explaining the difference between the work of Traidcraft and mainstream Fairtrade.

Today we write with good news: we asked everyone to do what they could to support Traidcraft - to show they care - and you responded in a big way. Whether it was in your church, school or workplace we were delighted with the way you took action.

Here are some of the specifics behind our festive trading ...

- Fair Trader sales are up on the previous Autumn season - after eight years of decline
- We processed over 20,000 Fair Trader orders.

- Christmas card sales through Fair Traders are up on last year, amazing in a world where card sales generally are declining

We want to say a huge thank you. It's because of your hard work that all this has been possible. Together we are changing lives - empowering farmers and artisans all over the world.

In light of both our struggles and our successes, we've chosen the theme for the spring season very carefully... **Let it Grow**. There is momentum building – people standing up for fairness, speaking out against injustice, making things better for the world's poorest ... but we need to Let It Grow.

We know that the world is full of potential: for families to be fed, children educated and poverty consigned to the history books ... but we need to Let It Grow. We're launching this campaign to continue Traidcraft's pioneering work and give it new energy as we head into 2016.

But what does that mean for you? Well, we will be working hard to help you grow your impact this spring. We've got some brilliant Let It Grow resources coming your way including new ideas for Big Brew and some incredible video stories - so look out for those.

We're working on more products designed with you in mind and we're aiming to make improvements across the whole organisation. We really value our team of loyal supporters. We know you work tirelessly on behalf of us, our producers and their families and so we want to make life easier for you!

This is really just a taste of what's to come. The most important thing is that you know that over the last few months we've built a strong foundation for success - but now we must push forward. Because while poverty still exists, standing still isn't an option.

We will be giving our all to help farmers, families and whole communities to grow this year and we hope you share some of our excitement and passion to see this happen.

Yours faithfully,

Andy Biggs

Chief Executive (interim)

† † † † † † † †

## VOLUNTEER STILL REQUIRED

**As I write this, no one has volunteered to take on the job of LINK magazine editor.**

**This edition will, therefore, be the last under my editorship and the last ever if no one takes it on!**

**If anyone would like to have a go at being the editor please let me know when I return from my sabbatical. I will give you any help that may be required.**

**I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the magazine since I took over in 2009.**

*Nick*

## Alphabet Bible Faces and Places Quiz – submitted by Mary Reynard

- A Seventh king of Israel
- B Place where a dream of a staircase from heaven to earth took place
- C Walking with a friend from Jerusalem to Emmaus
- D Thrown into a den of lions, but survived
- E A special garden of Adam and Eve
- F Roman governor at Paul's trial
- G Large lake in northern Israel
- H Sarah's servant
- I Powerful prophet of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC
- J Wife of an official of Herod Antipas
- K Valley separating Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives
- L Greek speaking doctor and disciple
- M Ruth's country
- N King of Babylon
- O Married to one of Naomi's sons
- P Paul's first missionary journey in Cyprus
- Q Roman governor of Syria when Jesus was born
- R Eldest son of Jacob and Leah
- S A special pool – a main source of water in Jerusalem
- T Friend and helper of Paul
- U Home country of Job
- V Divorced queen of Ahasueras
- W Bitter tasting absinth (not face or place!)
- X Ruler of Persia 486 – 465 BC (not Bible based)
- Y Name for Jehovah, used only by High Priests
- Z Wife of Moses

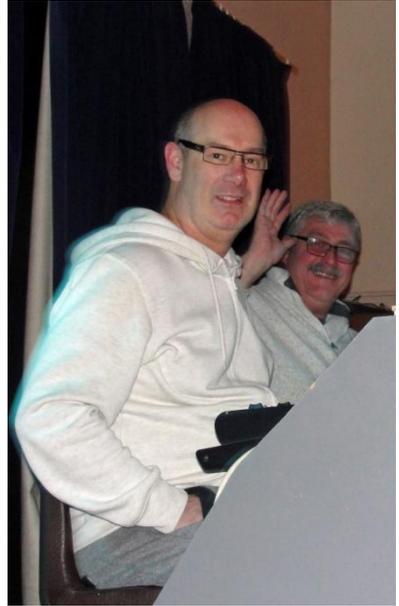
*Answers will be available on a sheet from Mary, unless someone takes on the editorship of the LINK.*



What a great panto we had this year. Everyone was fantastic, including the Ogre, even though I say so myself! The children were brilliant this year. They have been getting better every year, I can't wait to see how good they are in the next panto. The whole cast enjoy putting on the panto and have a lot of fun doing it. But the best thing about it is when the audience have a good time and leave with smiles on their faces. A big thank you to everyone who came to see the show, without you it would fall rather flat! Which panto will it be next year? We don't know yet, Oh no we don't!









**Trinity Players present  
their next production**

# **Abigail's Party**

**by Mike Leigh**



**Wednesday, 18th May  
to Saturday, 21st May 2016**





### **Risk-Taking by Lawrence Moore, Director of the Windermere Centre.**

What risks dare we take for the sake of faith? What sort of risks are necessary and appropriate? When is risk-taking a form of irresponsible stewardship? How do we distinguish between the persuasive voices of the adrenalin junkies among us and the voice and leading of the Holy Spirit?

These are discernment questions, aren't they? They're discipleship questions because they have to do with what we believe God is calling us to do - and to be - as faithful followers of Jesus.

They're raised by the nature and content of Christian faith itself. The first Christians were known as "Followers of The Way", recalling that the first disciples responded to Jesus' call literally to follow him around the Galilee and then up to Jerusalem. Faith (in biblical narratives) often involved literal as well as metaphorical journeys, just as it had for Abraham, the Hebrew slaves liberated by God in the Exodus, and the disoriented, shattered Jewish Jerusalemites who journeyed into exile in Babylon. Ultimately, Jesus called his own mission "The Way of the Cross" – his Easter journey to Jerusalem, suffering, and crucifixion that led to resurrection. It doesn't get any riskier than that.

So if faith is about discipleship – "following" – and if the primary image for the life of faith is "journey", it follows that faith is never about standing still! To stay faithful, God's people are always "on the move" into the next bit of the unknown future that God is calling us to.

Small wonder that the nation of Hebrew slaves liberated from Egypt longed to settle down, establish a city with walls, set up a monarchy, an army and a civil service, and build a temple! It was an insurance against the exhausting, risky business of always having to be on the move, ignorant of their next destination and the dangers that might be encountered on the way.

Jesus is much more explicit about the risks and cost involved in his particular journey (Mark 10), but hardly less comforting: “32 They were on the road, on their way to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. They were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve aside a third time, he began to tell them what was about to happen to him, 33 saying, “Listen to me: we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and hand him over to the Gentiles. 34 They will mock him and spit on

him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.”

So this is what Jesus meant when he said, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. If you try to hang on to your



life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it.” (Mark 8:34-5). Small wonder Peter rushes to tell him off.

But here’s the uncomfortable question about Peter’s response: is Peter horrified at what is going to happen to Jesus if he keeps following the Way of the Cross, or about what will happen to him, Peter, if willingness to die is genuinely Jesus’ criterion for being a disciple?

The answer’s probably “both!” But if he is so unwilling to face up to what

following Jesus means, is it any surprise that he ends up denying Jesus at the crucial moment?

This Epiphany season is a good point in the year to hear that challenge from Jesus again: the uncompromising warning that following him faithfully will cost us everything, and the unwavering promise that dying makes rising possible – and there isn't any other way to find Life!

So what risks are we prepared to take? How ought we to answer that as a church – as a community of disciples, not just as individuals? How ought we to answer as a denomination when we're being asked (as we are at present in the URC) to think about our life together in terms of “missional discipleship”?

“Risk” isn't an attractive proposition to us as a denomination at the moment. We feel perhaps too fragile; too vulnerable – that our very future existence is hanging in the balance. This is not a time to take any risks, we tell ourselves.

It wasn't always that way: our very birth was a risk. We asked members to allow their old denominational identities to die in order to bring to birth the United Reformed Church. We took the risk of being absolutely uncompromising about valuing women's ministry equally with men's in the

face of opposition from our ecumenical partners. We understood that risk-taking was intrinsic to being “Followers of The Way” – and we were up for it.

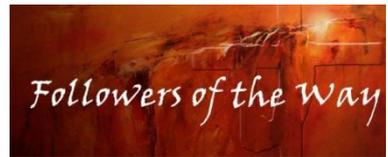


We discovered that a denominational

campaign of radical welcome was a risk too far. We didn't just say “no” to the ZI campaign: we buried it and invoked copyright ownership to prevent anyone else using materials developed with money from our ecumenical partners. And we have never dared to ask ourselves what happened – both to the campaign and us - and what lessons we might learn from the experience.

It may be pure coincidence, but since then, we have become increasingly risk-averse. We have behaved more and more like an organisation in textbook terminal decline: we exhibit huge levels of collective fear and anxiety; we carry out more and more reviews and gather more and more data; we pay extraordinary attention to processes and management programmes; we literally commission risk assessments about what happens if we respond too radically to the gospel, because, at bottom, we're driven by the fundamental terror of doing anything that might lose us one more member.

We reward bad behaviour: the person or section of the church that threatens to leave if we don't do things their way is allowed to wield extraordinary power. We go forward at the pace of the slowest and only do those things that we think will be a "one size fits all" initiative.



Most worryingly, we lose confidence in the transforming nature of the gospel and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. Instead of seeking to become more radically faithful, we become more institutionally obsessed. We're more concerned with how to be a successful institution than a faithful church (though we dress the question up the other way round). We put our trust in management, efficiency savings, education, insights from the market, caution and prudence.

The question with which we are constantly faced is this: how do we live and set priorities and discern the voice of the Spirit when faced with Jesus' Way of the Cross? What risks will we not take if Christian faith is all about living Easter-shaped lives? That was the challenge facing the earliest Church and it is no less binding upon us.

The Book of Acts is the story of the Holy Spirit racing ahead, impatient for the fledgling church of Jesus followers to get with the programme, realise that there is no point in trying to save their lives or their comfort zones and instead, to begin to experience the abundance of Spirit-life that God has for them. That's when they begin to be God's people, transformed by the gospel, making a difference for Christ's sake.

**So what risks are we (personally, collectively and denominationally) prepared to take for the gospel in 2016 ...?**

## REGULAR ACTIVITIES IN OUR CHURCHES

### Clayton West

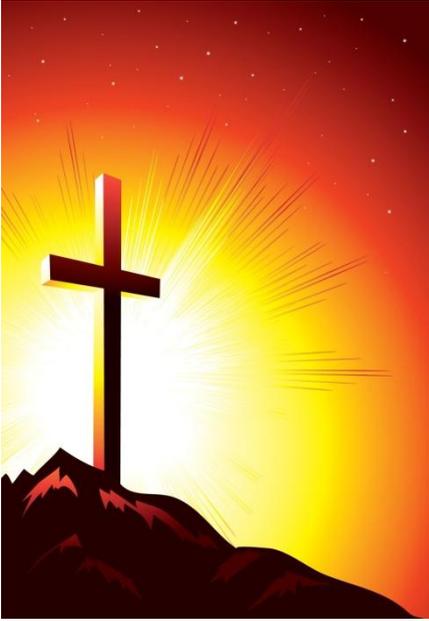
Sunday	Worship every week at 3.00 pm. Communion is included in the service on the 1 <sup>st</sup> first Sunday of each month
Friday	Baby and Toddler Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm ( <i>in term time</i> )
Saturday	Coffee Morning on the 4 <sup>th</sup> Saturday each month 10.00am

### Trinity (Barnsley)

Sunday	Worship every week at 10.30 am. Communion is included in the service on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> third Sunday of each month
Tuesday	Bible Study at 7.30 pm
Wednesday	Age-Well ( <i>over 50s club</i> ) every week 10.30am-1.00pm Trinity Players every week at 7.30pm

### West Melton

Sunday	Worship on the 1 <sup>st</sup> ( <i>inc. WHIZZ KIDS</i> ) and 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays at 10.30am and on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays at 3.00pm. Communion is included in the service on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month
Tuesday	Fellowship evening ( <i>varied programme</i> ) 7.30pm on the 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month
Wednesday	Little Stars 9.30am every week ( <i>in term time</i> )
Saturday	Men's Breakfast at 8.00am on the 3rd Saturday each month



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**WEST MELTON:** Mr. John Paskell. *(As above)*

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