



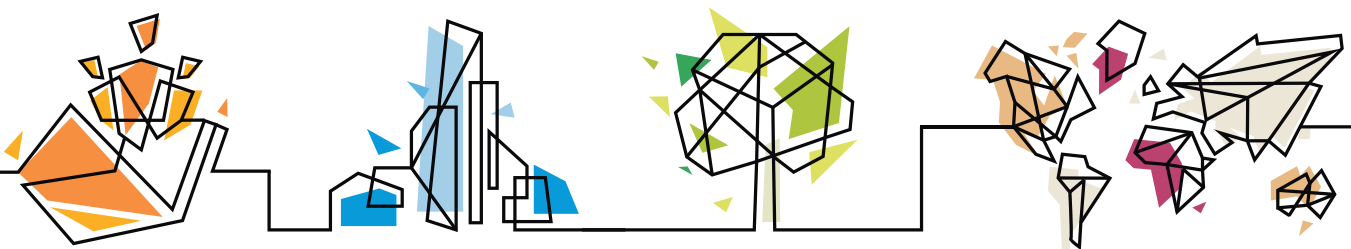
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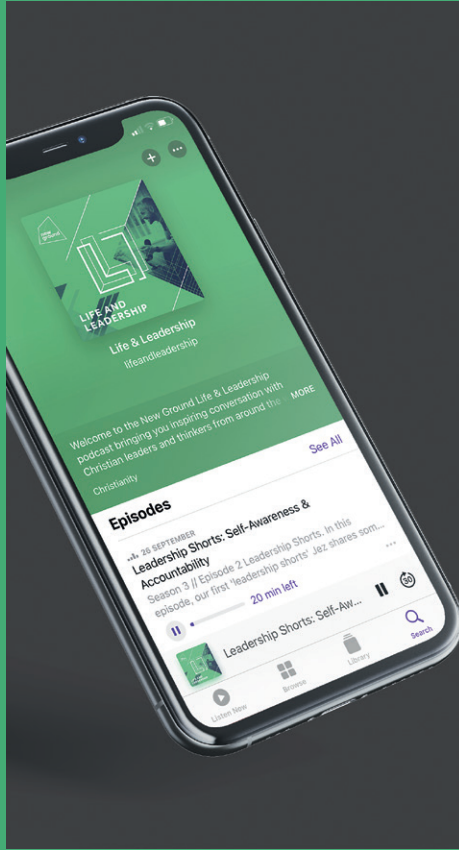
LATEST



NOVEMBER 2022



Raising Leaders. Impacting Communities. Planting Churches. Reaching Nations.



The smartphone screen shows the 'Life & Leadership' podcast app. At the top, it says 'LIFE AND LEADERSHIP' and 'Life & Leadership #leadwithpurpose'. Below that, a welcome message reads: 'Welcome to the New Ground Life & Leadership podcast, bringing you inspiring conversation with Christian leaders and thinkers from around the world.' There is a 'See All' link. Under the 'Episodes' section, the featured episode is 'Leadership Shorts: Self-Awareness & Accountability', dated 25 SEPTEMBER. It is Season 3, Episode 2, and is 20 minutes long. The bottom navigation bar includes 'Listen Now', 'Home', 'Library', and 'Search'.



NEW GROUND PODCAST

To enable you to thrive as a follower of Jesus, wherever you are and whatever you're going through.



The smartphone screen shows the 'BLOG' app. The main article is titled 'Gritty Unity' and features a silhouette of people with arms raised against a sunset. The text below the image reads: 'Peter Anderson leads City on a Hill church in Edinburgh and the Go Global family of churches and will be speaking at our Leadership Conference in November 2022. Peter shares his passion for unity in the Body of Christ.' There is a 'Read More' button and a small profile picture of Peter Anderson. At the bottom, there is a date '15 2022' and a social media handle '@newgroundchurches.org'.



NEW GROUND BLOG

Keep up with news from around the New Ground world.

2023

PRAYER DAYS
22-23 February 2023
14-15 June 2023

FEARLESS CONFERENCE
30 June – 1 July 2023

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New Ground is a registered charity, no. 1121110.
Our registered office is: New Ground, King's Centre,
33 Amy Road, Oxted, Surrey, RH8 0PW

E: admin@newgroundchurches.org
T: 01883 734 805
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our New Ground Latest magazine full of news, stories, teaching and insights into so much of what God is doing now amongst us as a family of churches, as well as some things He will be doing in the future.

I'm pretty sure you would agree with me that these past few years have generally been full of uncertainty and turmoil. The global pandemic has left us realising that we were not as in control of things as we thought we may have been. The financial crisis around us reminds us of how we are surrounded by people who are in increasing need. There's a war going on in Europe right now (who would have predicted that?) and the planet is constantly under threat through climate change, famine, earthquakes, injustices and governments and systems that are no longer stable. All of which is meant to remind us that everything other than the Kingdom of God is temporary, easily shaken and fading away. That has always been the case since Adam and Eve rebelled against God and tried to take His place – we just forget and get caught up in the temporal ourselves. At least until a time of shaking happens like the one we are going through now.

I believe that God wants us as His people to wake up through all of this. As the world literally shakes in every way possible it becomes our opportunity to tell the world that there is eternal hope. This planet is not the end. We have a wonderful message of hope in the midst of growing hopelessness. Despite all the upheaval of recent years, it's time for us as the people of God to fix our eyes on that which doesn't change. An unchanging God, unchanging and immovable promises, a gospel that never loses its power to transform lives – it's still the power of salvation for EVERYONE who believes. The Holy Spirit continues to empower us. There's a whole new generation emerging that desperately needs the baptism in the Holy Spirit and He is just waiting to come upon us. Jesus is still building His church and the gates of Hell will still not prevail. The mission of the church to proclaim and demonstrate good news has not diminished. In fact, the harvest is more ready than ever. Nothing that has happened over the last few years has diminished any of these truths and across the New Ground family of churches we need to move forward, in faith, full of expectation that we will see a breakthrough like never before.

Someone said to me recently, "It's as if everything I once knew and hoped for has changed." Will you join me in believing that nothing has changed? It all depends on where you place your hope and in whom. Fix your eyes on Jesus – the author and perfecter of your faith.

This magazine is available in English, French and Brazilian Portuguese. You can request a copy in your preferred language from your New Ground church, or use this QR code to read it on our website.



INTRODUCTION

Bienvenue dans notre magazine New Ground Latest, rempli de nouvelles, de témoignages, d'enseignements et d'aperçus de ce que Dieu fait en ce moment au sein de notre famille d'Églises, ainsi que de certaines choses qu'il fera à l'avenir.

Je suis certain que vous partagerez le constat que ces dernières années ont été marquées par l'incertitude et l'agitation. La pandémie mondiale nous a fait prendre conscience que nous n'avions pas autant le contrôle des choses que nous le pensions. La crise financière qui nous entoure nous rappelle à quel point nous avons des personnes autour de nous qui sont de plus en plus dans le besoin. Une guerre est en cours en Europe (qui l'aurait prêté ?) et la planète est constamment menacée par le changement climatique, la famine, les tremblements de terre, les injustices et les gouvernements et systèmes qui sont instables. Tout cela pour nous rappeler que tout ce qui n'est pas le Royaume de Dieu est temporaire, facilement ébranlé et en voie de disparition. Cela a toujours été le cas depuis qu'Adam et Eve se sont rebellés contre Dieu et ont essayé de prendre sa place – nous l'oublions simplement et nous nous laissons prendre par le temporel. Du moins jusqu'à ce qu'un temps d'ébranlement se produise, comme celui que nous traversons actuellement.

Je crois que Dieu veut que son peuple se réveille à travers tout cela. Alors que le monde est littéralement secoué de toutes les manières possibles, cela devient notre opportunité de dire au monde qu'il y a un espoir éternel. Cette planète n'est pas la fin. Nous avons un merveilleux message d'espérance au milieu d'un désespoir croissant. Malgré tous les bouleversements de ces dernières années, il est temps pour nous, peuple de Dieu, de fixer nos yeux sur ce qui ne change pas. Un Dieu immuable, des promesses inaltérables et fermes, un évangile qui ne perd jamais son pouvoir de transformer les vies – c'est toujours la puissance de Dieu pour le salut pour TOUTE PERSONNE qui croit. Le Saint-Esprit continue à nous donner sa puissance. Une toute nouvelle génération émerge qui a désespérément besoin du baptême du Saint-Esprit et ce dernier désire venir sur nous. Jésus continue à bâtir son Église et les portes de l'enfer ne prévaudront toujours pas. La mission de l'Église de proclamer et de démontrer la bonne nouvelle n'a pas diminué. En fait, la moisson est plus prête que jamais. Rien de ce qui s'est passé ces dernières années n'a diminué ces vérités et dans la famille d'Églises New Ground, nous devons aller de l'avant, dans la foi, pleins d'espoir que nous verrons une percée comme jamais auparavant.

Quelqu'un m'a dit récemment : "C'est comme si tout ce que j'ai connu et espéré avait changé". Allez-vous vous joindre à moi pour croire que rien n'a changé ? Tout dépend de ce dans quoi vous placez votre espoir et en qui. Fixez vos yeux sur Jésus – l'auteur et le perfectionneur de votre foi.

INTRODUÇÃO

Bem-vindo à nossa revista "New Ground Últimas notícias", uma revista cheia de histórias, ensinamentos e percepções o que Deus está fazendo agora entre nós como família de igrejas, bem como algumas coisas que Ele estará fazendo no futuro.

Tenho certeza de que vocês concordarão comigo que estes últimos anos têm sido geralmente cheios de incertezas e tumultos. A pandemia global nos deixou conscientes de que não estávamos tão no controle das coisas como pensávamos que poderíamos estar. A crise financeira ao nosso redor nos lembra de como estamos cercados por pessoas que estão em crescente necessidade. Há uma guerra em curso na Europa neste momento (quem teria previsto isso?) e o planeta está constantemente sob ameaça através das mudanças climáticas, fome, terremotos, injustiças e governos e sistemas que não são mais estáveis. Tudo isso para nos lembrar que tudo que não seja o Reino de Deus é temporário, facilmente abalado e se desvanece. Este sempre foi o caso desde que Adão e Eva se rebelaram contra Deus e tentaram tomar seu lugar – nós mesmos nos esquecemos e nos deixamos levar pelo temporal. Pelo menos até que um momento de tremor aconteça como aquele que estamos passando agora.

Creio que Deus quer que nós, como Seu povo, acordemos através de tudo isso. Como o mundo se abala literalmente de todas as maneiras possíveis, torna-se nossa oportunidade de dizer ao mundo que existe uma esperança eterna. Este planeta não é o fim. Temos uma maravilhosa mensagem de esperança no meio da crescente desesperança. Apesar de todas as convulsões dos últimos anos, é hora de nós, como povo de Deus, fixarmos nossos olhos naquilo que não muda. Um Deus imutável, promessas imutáveis e, um evangelho que nunca perde seu poder de transformar vidas – ainda é o poder da salvação para TODOS que acreditam. O Espírito Santo continua a nos fortalecer. Há toda uma nova geração emergindo que precisa desesperadamente do batismo no Espírito Santo e Ele está apenas esperando para vir sobre nós. Jesus ainda está construindo sua igreja e as portas do inferno não prevalecerão. A missão da igreja de proclamar e demonstrar boas novas não diminuiu. Na verdade, a colheita está mais pronta do que nunca. Nada do que aconteceu nos últimos anos diminuiu nenhuma destas verdades e em toda a família de igrejas New Ground precisamos avançar, na fé, cheios de expectativa de que veremos um avanço como nunca antes.

Alguém me disse recentemente: "É como se tudo o que eu conhecia e esperava tivesse mudado". Você se unirá a mim, na fé de que nada mudou? Tudo depende de onde você deposita sua esperança e em quem. Fixe seus olhos em Jesus – o autor e aperfeiçoador de sua fé.

FINDING FREEDOM

John Ghanim



John Ghanim rejected Islam and left his home country of Yemen to pursue religious freedom. Our Communications Co-ordinator, Claudine Roberts, met with John to ask about his journey to the UK, how he encountered Jesus and how he found himself working for one of our New Ground churches, reaching out to other asylum seekers.

"My family decided to go to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, the heart of Islam. I went with my parents and lots of other members of my family, it was a big religious journey. I was so excited to experience Allah! We had to walk around the Kaaba, a black box or house – they call it the house of Allah. While I was going around it I was looking at this clock tower, a tall, beautiful building. My uncle who was leading us noticed I wasn't concentrating so he told me, "Mohammed (that was my name), look to the house of Allah, not to the buildings of Satan!" I had questions in my mind – "Are we worshipping a stone? Does Allah, the creator of heaven and earth, live in this house?" I thought "If he exists, he's bigger than this." That was the moment when I lost my Islamic faith. That was the darkest moment in my life.



I went clothes shopping with my friends from university and we found a t-shirt with a cross on it. I don't know how that ended up in Yemen, it's forbidden. My friends dared me to wear it. I told them "No, you're crazy! You wear it." But in the end I said I would put it on in the shop and take a selfie and upload it to Facebook. I don't know why I did that, it was a crazy move! Now I know it was a sign from God, preparing the way. The second thing happened at a second-hand bookshop. I was with my friends and I found a New Testament, hidden under the other books. I

bought it and hid it from my friends. I took it to my house and hid it under my clothes. That was like the second sign.

My auntie needed to leave Yemen to go to Djibouti to get a visa to join her husband in the US. I was chosen to accompany her, because women in Yemen aren't allowed to travel without a guardian. I was supposed to go back to Yemen, but this was a good opportunity for me to find my freedom. I didn't want to go back to Yemen to live this false life. So I called my wife and told her I would send for her and our daughters to join me. I was planning to go to the US but then Donald Trump barred anyone from Yemen from entering the country.

I had heard about Syrian people going from Turkey to Greece. I saw it on YouTube. I had no other options, so I did the same – Malaysia to Iran, Iran to Turkey, Turkey to Greece. It was so hard. When I crossed from Iran to Turkey I was arrested by the army and beaten. It took me four attempts to get into Turkey. After that I took a small boat to Greece. I was seeking freedom. The war in Yemen was part of it, but the most important thing was my dignity as a human being. I wanted to exercise my freedom. I didn't want to practise Islam. I didn't want to be a Muslim. That's why I couldn't go back to Yemen.



The most important thing was my dignity as a human being. I wanted to exercise my freedom. I didn't want to practise Islam. I didn't want to be a Muslim.

I slept on the streets for three months in Greece inside a refugee camp. While I was in the camp I saw a man from Syria with a cross tattoo on his hand. He told me about Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, the Messiah. He asked me if I'd like to know more and told me about a Bible study with some German people. The Germans told me Jesus Christ was the Son of God. I had lots of questions. They invited me to church, a Greek church with translations into Arabic, French and other languages. I went to the church and they were praising and worshipping God with their arms up. It was the first time in my life I'd seen men and women





worshipping together. And they were confident and joyful. They were so happy! Then the 80-year-old pastor preached in Greek. There were many refugees and asylum seekers there, so his sermon was very evangelistic. He explained the gospel, that Jesus died on the cross and rose to life to pay for our sins and we are free if we believe in him. I was amazed, but I still had lots of questions and no faith. I needed to meet God personally. After the service people came up to us and hugged us and talked to us. A guy from Norway gave me a New Testament in Arabic as a gift. I was so curious to read it and to understand why they were so happy. I went back to the camp and started reading from the gospel of Matthew. When I got to the story of Jesus' baptism in chapter 3 I said "Wow, God speaks from heaven! This is the God I'm looking for. He speaks!"

I went back the next Sunday and at the end the pastor asked if anyone wanted to give their life to Jesus. I raised my hand and people gathered around me and laid hands on me. When I became a Christian I went back to the camp and I started telling people I was a Christian and they started to persecute me. I didn't understand, because they were in Europe and they also came to seek freedom. One of the Yemenis tried to kill me. I continued to evangelise and baptise people, with the missionaries. They wanted to kill me because they thought I was converting Muslims to Christianity. The missionaries advised me to leave Greece.

I went to France, but I don't speak French. I went to Norway, but I don't speak Norwegian. I went to Sweden, but I don't speak Swedish. So I ended up in the UK. I presented myself at Gatwick airport and they were so welcoming! I was speechless at their kindness. I think God sent me to the UK. I never planned to come here. My plan was to join my family in the US. Through friends, I connected with Newfrontiers and then New Ground and the New Ground church in the city I was in. One of the leaders from the New Ground church called me and invited me to church. They welcomed me.

After the pandemic the church asked me if I'd like to work for them 2 or 3 days a week for a year. One of the church leaders kept asking me what I really want to do and I told him I want to go to the hostels to tell refugees and asylum seekers about Jesus. He kept telling me we couldn't access the hostels because they are government run. We had that conversation more than 5 times! I told him we need to serve refugees and asylum seekers, because I've been in their situation. And God is wonderful! He opened this beautiful door and answered the prayer! We received a call from a Christian doctor and arranged to meet with her. I hadn't recognised

the address, but when I arrived at the hostel to meet with the church leader and the doctor I said, "This is the hostel I've been telling you about!" It was the hostel I stayed in when I first arrived in the city and the hostel I always pictured when I prayed that God would open a door.

It is very dangerous for Christians in Yemen, because it's tribal. Islam comes first, then the tribes, then the government. If you become a Christian and the tribes can't find you, the government will find you and give you three days, but if you don't turn back to Islam they will execute you. This is why I receive death threats daily. They want to silence me. We are Yemenis, our identity is Islam. Five years ago when I first started to receive these death threats I used to lie awake all night, I couldn't sleep. But God gave me this strength. He promised he would be with me. And he promised he would use me to reach many nations, not just Yemenis or Arab nations. This is his promise. It's beyond my understanding."

Read the full transcript of John's interview on our website by scanning this QR code.



Impacting
Communities

RESPONDING TO THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Natalie Williams, Jubilee+

Hardly a week seems to go by these days without scary headlines about the cost of living crisis. Energy bills soaring even beyond the doomsday predictions; milk, meat, cheese, eggs and other staple foods escalating in price; and the eye-watering cost of filling up a car these days.



The needs in our communities skyrocketed. And it's in that context that the cost of living crisis has arrived. Many of us – individually and as churches – were already working or volunteering flat-out, compassionately loving our neighbours with a renewed energy and commitment. New projects sprang up, existing projects expanded. So when the cost of living crisis hit, many of us wondered if we could do any more.

In November 2019, at Jubilee+ we published a booklet called *A Deepening Crisis?* In it, we described the prophetic sense we had, along with many others, that the lives of the poorest were about to get harder. We added the question mark to the title because we weren't sure how or why this would happen. We believed God had spoken clearly to us through his prophets, but humanly speaking, it didn't seem that likely.

Then, at the start of 2020, a whole bunch of words we hadn't really used much before suddenly became a common part of our vocabulary: 'pandemic', 'lockdown', 'face masks', 'social distancing', and many more. The coronavirus pandemic hit us all. Politicians, journalists and social commentators started calling it 'the great leveller' – after all, if even Prime Ministers can end up hospitalised by Covid-19, as happened in the UK, clearly no amount of power, status, wealth or privilege could protect anyone.



It didn't take long for charities, churches and others to push back against this language, pointing out that although we are all in the same storm, we are not all in the same boat. Some weathered the worst of the pandemic as if they were on a cruise liner, others like they were clinging to a piece of driftwood in the middle of the raging seas.



It's time for us to proclaim Jesus boldly, expect to see signs, wonders and salvation in our social action, and to see transformed lives.

Here are three things we at Jubilee+ have observed in 2022, particularly in churches in the UK – in New Ground, Newfrontiers, and beyond:

1. Churches are becoming more strategic in their outlook on poverty in their communities and wanting to go deeper rather than broader. Most of us aren't hoping to open many more projects, we're looking to see lives changed by empowering people to come out of poverty, and then to help others out too. This means we're thinking more relationally and longer-term, beyond crisis support (as vital as that is).
2. There is a renewed call to discipleship when it comes to the poverty and injustice around us – we really seem to be moving into a season where the call to Christlikeness (for individual Christians and whole churches) is causing us to grow one step at a time into greater hearts for, and expressions of, mercy, compassion, generosity, concern for justice, welcome, and even righteous anger about the distress people are facing.
3. Our desire to see people saved is leading us to be more intentional about making sure Jesus is proclaimed and hope in him is offered to those we're serving. We've heard about Darlington Foodbank, where no one was saved in the first eight years, but where scores have been saved (as well as some physically healed and some set free of addictions) during the pandemic. Most of us are jealous. We're hungry for this to be true in all



our churches! But we're realising that our social action had been drifting away from Jesus, becoming just good works, and now a lot of us are working hard to arrest that trend in its tracks.

The lives of the poorest around us are going to continue to get harder. The prophetic words that led Jubilee+ to publish *A Deepening Crisis?* indicated a lengthy period of hardship was coming. We are in it now, but it's only just started. It's time for us to proclaim Jesus boldly, expect to see signs, wonders and salvation in our social action, and to see transformed lives and, on the back of that, changed churches.



To download our new booklet *Responding to a Deepening Crisis*, which features simple suggestions for how to respond to the challenge of rising needs in your church, and in your community, as well as how to engage with those in positions of power who can make a difference, go to jubilee-plus.org/resources.

To find out about how Jubilee+ can partner with your church, scan the QR code below or visit jubilee-plus.org/partners.



COST OF LIVING CRISIS PLEASE PRAY

- For individual Christians to increasingly see the needs around them and respond with compassion and generosity.
- For us to see many people who are facing poverty come to place their faith in Jesus and be transformed into oaks of righteousness who go on to help others come out of poverty (Is. 61:1-4).
- Churches to have mercy and compassion woven deep into their DNA.
- Church-based social action projects to increasingly offer the mercy, power and hope that is uniquely ours to offer.
- Social action projects to move from vital crisis support into also lifting people in our communities out of poverty.



Impacting
Communities

PARTNERING IN DISCIPLESHIP

Matt Fell



Hi there! I'm a part of City Church Cambridge, and I run the ID training course on behalf of Relational Mission churches. ID stands for Intentional Discipleship. It's our equivalent of the New Ground Impact training course, a year-long church internship and discipleship programme. I've had the pleasure of leading it for seven years now. I love spending time with young people, hearing their stories and sharing the gospel with them. It's a privilege to help them think through the big questions and set them up for a lifetime of loving Jesus and serving his church. When I'm not running ID, I'm studying for my PhD in theology or hanging out with my wife and three kids.

Over the past two years, ID has partnered with both New Ground and Catalyst churches and helped provide the training for your Impact programme. At first, this happened because of the pandemic. Numbers were down across the courses, so New Ground began sending Impact students to ID for training. It's been an immense joy and privilege to spend time with your students. It's really enriched the whole training experience, bringing together young people from different spheres and parts of the UK, giving them a big apostolic picture. All in all, it's been brilliant, so we've decided to keep that partnership going for the foreseeable future.

This means that New Ground churches will continue to host Impact students, and ID will provide theological training, just as we have done for the past two years. We deliver the teaching through residential training weeks and online teaching. The residential training happens in

Cambridge, where I'm based, three times a year (September, November and March). Cambridge is an excellent place for folks to come and learn; it's central and easy to get to. Then we take the students to a Newfrontiers church plant in Europe once a year for a week of cross-cultural experience, mission and teaching. This past year we visited the vibrant Grace Church in Stockholm and had a blast. We had such an encouraging time sharing the gospel on the streets of the city and were able to practically serve the church.



Alongside our in-person training, we do online teaching throughout the year. Each week we have three hours over Zoom (with breaks) to catch up with one another, discuss what we're reading in Scripture, and hear from brilliant teachers who come and join us. It's an excellent way of keeping in touch with the gang throughout the year, drip-feeding the teaching, and journeying with them.



“

New Ground churches will continue to host Impact students, and ID will provide theological training, just as we have done for the past two years.

It's been a joy to partner with New Ground, and I'm so excited that will continue. Before I sign off, let me share. This is what Mel had to say about her ID year.



"I have come all the way from Zimbabwe to do an internship with Hope Church in London Orpington. I have been involved with the youth ministry and worship, and I absolutely loved my year. I have grown so much in my faith through the youth work and the discipleship training. Coming here my vision of the Bible was a bit blurry, but I definitely feel very confident after all the teachings I have received. Looking back, I am very grateful to have had the chance to embark on this journey of getting to know God more."

Please do continue to recruit for Impact/ID. It's such a huge blessing to the people who come through the course and the churches that host them.

I'm looking forward to continuing our partnership.

IMPACT
SIGN UP

Folks can sign up by scanning this QR code.



**Raising
Leaders**

THE DEAD PREACHERS' SOCIETY

Debora Costa



There can be no doubt that God gives some within his Church a particular gift for preaching (1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11). Those of us blessed with such a gift can gain such joy from preaching the word of God, but we still need to learn and develop the skills to be able to communicate the word and serve our church families well. I am grateful for the encouragement and support I have been given in this learning process and it was such a privilege to attend the Dead Preachers' Society conference in Eastbourne, in July 2022, as part of that process.

The Dead Preacher's Society describes itself as a group of friends wanting to learn from the past how to preach in the present in order to shape the future.

The conference website said:

"If we preachers want to preach effectively now, we need to learn from the resources of the past, develop fresh skills for now, and look beyond the curve at the trends that are hurtling toward us. The conference seeks to take the past, present, and future seriously, so that we can shape our biblical preaching so that it will communicate with freshness to our contemporary situation."

It proved to be an incredible couple of days of encouragement, inspiration, and equipping. John Woods, Ben Virgo, David Hilborn and Natalie Williams shared so much from their own experiences of their development as preachers.

Natalie shared her thoughts on the importance of an awareness of invisible divides within our culture, reminding us to do it all with a heart of humility and vulnerability.

John Woods, in his "Brief Sermon on Preaching for Preachers", addressed fundamental keys to help us in this journey of preaching and leadership. He quoted Mark Sayers' book A Non-Anxious Presence, where he suggests that a whole raft of partially submerged anxieties came to the surface in the minds of church leaders during the pandemic:

"Leadership was once seen as the art of building consensus. However, now it can feel like the act of desperately avoiding conflict – a change that is creating anxiety in many leaders."

John unpacked the treasure of resting in Jesus, addressing the challenging issue of being weary and burned out as result of our fears and expectations, whether that is expectations from others, from us or from God. Coming from a very busy, full-on season, combined with my own personal challenges with perfectionism and not wanting to let people down, it felt like this session was entirely for me. He reminded us it is not how much you know, it is not how powerful you are, but who you know. Jesus knew the Father. Jesus was in a relationship with the Father, taking pleasure and rest; and true discipleship is learning to travel light with Jesus. We work within His work. We live within His life. We serve within His service.

“

Nothing gives me more joy than seeing the word of God at work in people's hearts and their lives being transformed by it.

David and Natalie provided helpful insights and tools to help us communicate the word of God.

David talked about the importance of cultural engagement, quoting Karl Barth: "The Bible in one hand and the newspaper in another."



Ben Virgo is a director, speaker and guide for Christian Heritage London. He spoke on the theme of what we can learn from historical preachers. It was such a delight to hear him share some of the stories he includes on his Christian Heritage walks and the history of those incredible preachers of the past. Absolutely remarkable, faith provoking and inspiring. He encouraged us to be faithful with the little things and to take a long, intense look at Jesus, often. He also reminded us that people change the world – none of those preachers set out to change the world, they just set their roots in Jesus. It all flows out of that pursuit of knowing Him.

Nothing gives me more joy than seeing the word of God at work in people's hearts and their lives being transformed by it, so learning how to communicate His word is vital. I came away understanding that great preachers are those who understand the human condition, know God well and combine those things. All the Puritans preached a felt Christ. I was inspired to turn the pages slowly and be saturated in Scripture. To allow the word of God to dwell in me, so that when I preach, it overflows. So that every sermon leads people to love God and love others.

Those days were so full of depth and truth, so rich and relevant. This preacher is very much alive and ready to preach.



RAISING LEADERS PLEASE PRAY

- For a good intake for Impact in 2023.
- For the teaching on Impact to bear fruit.
- For the Impact students to form life-long friendships that lead to gospel partnership.
- Pray for the New Ground Academy – for all the current students and for a good intake in 2023.



Raising
Leaders

A NEW KINGDOM

Jim Partridge



Just a few weeks ago, on Saturday 10 September 2022, the Accession Council officially proclaimed King Charles III as our new monarch, stepping into the role that his mother Queen Elizabeth II fulfilled with grace and humility for 70 years.

The eyes of the world were on the UK as crowds of people lined the streets and thousands queued through the night to pay their own respects to our late Queen. Since then, there have been many discussions about the kind of King Charles will be. As soon as he acceded to the throne people were asking questions about his kingdom: how far his rule and reign will extend, will he continue to be the Head of State for various nations, what impact will his reign have on the Commonwealth, and when will we get new stamps?



This talk of king and kingdom has caused me to reflect on what it means for Jesus to be King in my own life. Of course, we know that our late Queen was very clear and vocal about her faith in Jesus – she spoke of him as her inspiration, anchor and example. For all her years of rule, for all her experience, wealth and position, she still looked to another as the King of her life.

The book of Revelation tells us that this Jesus is the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:16). But what does that mean in a world being shaken by global pandemics, war, political uncertainty and huge economic challenges?

When Jesus began his ministry, his primary message was “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” (Matthew 4:17)

Jesus’ ministry came with an announcement, an incredible earth changing declaration. Something of eternal significance was happening in the history of the world. God had come near in Christ and a new Kingdom was breaking out through his life and ministry.

This Kingdom was not like any other kingdom on earth; it did not align with any political party or philosophical world view. It was revolutionary and radical and heavenly. The Bible tells us that those who surrender their life to Jesus as Lord and King are given a brand new start and a brand new identity in this Kingdom. God has rescued us from one kingdom and brought into “the kingdom of the Son he loves” (Colossians 1:13).

Let me say it again this Kingdom is not like any other earthly kingdom.

It’s utterly different. It doesn’t blend in with the culture, it doesn’t go with the flow, it stands out, it shines bright, it confronts the world’s way of doing things, it’s radically different, the Kingdom of Jesus has a completely different value system.

“

There’s so much pressure on the church right now to ‘catch-up’ with culture and conform but the last thing our world needs right now is a Church that looks like everything else.

So, what does it mean for us to be citizens of this Kingdom? The apostle Paul frequently reminded us that this is our true identity, we are citizens of heaven. How do we live our lives today, following this King and his Kingdom? Jesus said that we should seek his Kingdom before all other things, he encouraged us to pray for his Kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven and in the Sermon on the Mount he instructs us on how to live out his Kingdom values.

To be a Christian, therefore, to be a follower of Jesus, is to declare that Jesus is Lord of your life; he's in charge, he calls the shots, his word is the final word, Jesus is the King and because of that our lives, how we live, the choices we make, our responses, our thoughts, attitudes and actions – they are all inspired and modelled upon Jesus, who is our King.

It seems that many people today are questioning what it means to follow Jesus in a world that has been so impacted by a global pandemic? Our churches were shut for many months, do we really need to regather in the same way again? The storm of Covid-19 caused many to ask big questions about life, faith and priorities; what does it really mean to follow Jesus in 2022?

The answers to these questions, however, can only be found in response to the knowledge that Jesus is King of Kings and his life and ministry announced a new Kingdom breaking out on earth, that we are now part of. To be a Christian, therefore, is to follow this King, to pledge our allegiance to him, to recognise he is Lord over every part of our lives and to live as citizens of his Kingdom. Which means we are not to conform to the patterns of the world. Instead, we are to be shaped by another King and another Kingdom all together. And this Kingdom is radically different to everything else on planet earth, because Jesus was radically different.

BECOMING LIKE THE KING

At our Leadership Conference in November, we are looking at the theme of leading like Jesus. I'm so glad we are taking time to consider this subject because there's an old-fashioned idea that I believe we need to radically reclaim today – and that is Christlikeness.

Ultimately, to be a Christian, is to become like Christ. It sounds so simple, yet we make it so complicated as we are assaulted by so many different forces clamoring for our attention, devotion and time.

To be a Christian, is to become more and more like Jesus. So, what mattered to Jesus matters to us. His priorities become our priorities. His values, become our values. Citizens of heaven's Kingdom are meant to become like the King of that Kingdom.

- A King who said of himself that he is gentle and lowly of heart.
- A King who set an example for us all as he washed his disciples' feet.
- A King who said don't worry about tomorrow, your Father knows what you need.
- A King who said that to be truly blessed is to be meek, pure, seekers of peace.
- A King who offered radical welcome to unexpected people.
- A King who was never too busy to enjoy a meal with friends.
- A King who said that love, if it is to be true love, needs to be given to our enemies.
- A King who was far more concerned with the inner man than outward performance.
- A King who loved the Church and gave himself up for her.
- A King who was nothing like the King that people expected.

There's so much pressure on the Church right now to 'catch-up' with culture and conform but the last thing

our world needs right now is a Church that looks like everything else. The greatest thing our worlds needs right now is a Church that looks like Jesus.

- The world does not need a Church that blends in. The world needs a Church that stands out.
- The world does not need a Church that conforms to its culture. The world needs a Church that is utterly counter culture.
- The world does not need a culturally relevant Church. The world needs a Church utterly shaped by its King and the Kingdom of heaven.

We have a great King, who saved us into an eternal Kingdom. Let's not settle for everything the world offers when we have been called to something infinitely greater and more beautiful: to not only follow, but become like, our Lord and our King Jesus.



NEW GROUND IN BRAZIL

Danny Lucena

This summer two churches in Brazil officially joined the New Ground family. Here's a brief profile of each church, so you can start getting to know them and pray for them. Welcome to New Ground, Agape Community Church and Raizes Church!



The church is located in a small town (25,000 people) called Iracemapolis in the state of São Paulo. Iracemapolis has a small population, but its children experience a high rate of abuse, violence and poverty. Agape Church started with Biro and Patricia telling gospel stories to children on the streets. Currently Agape Church provides a safe space for these children and is always open, every day of the week.

AGAPE COMMUNITY CHURCH



It all started with a shirtless boy with torture marks on his body. This was the trigger that made Biro and Patricia say to each other, "We need to do something!" That was ten years ago. Biro and Patricia decided to be God's answer to their small town.

Agape Church started with 6 people and they currently have 130 members. The church actually grew during the global Covid-19 pandemic.



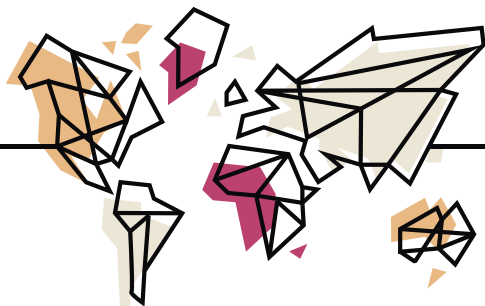
“

It all started with
a shirtless boy with torture
marks on his body.

Agape Church offers around 27 projects in 60 different classes. Some of these projects are: Mini Chef Cuisine, storytelling, guitar, keyboard, street dance, theatre, jazz, classical ballet beginners, singing, English for kids and teens, artistic gymnastics, football, Jiu Jitsu, Judo, Muay Thai and much more.

Agape Church is now part of the New Ground family and will be very happy to welcome you with their wonderful Brazilian hospitality.

You can learn more about Agape at: givebrazil.com/agape



RAIZES CHURCH



Eleven years ago, Carlos and Cinda received the invitation to revitalize an old and traditional Baptist church in the city of Piracicaba. Carlos had graduated from the Baptist theological seminary and after spending time in prayer, he and Cinda accepted the challenge. "Raizes" means "Roots".

Piracicaba is a very beautiful city with more than 400,000 inhabitants in the state of São Paulo. A city with many universities and large companies, but also with dangerous and poor areas.



They faced many challenges with legalism and traditionalism, but today the church is experiencing an awakening in the gifts and freedom of the holy spirit. The church has grown and during the Covid-19 pandemic the church welcomed homeless people to live inside the church building. In addition, the church started social projects to help the poor.

With that, God in his sovereignty gave growth to the church with more leaders, musicians and people from other churches, but mainly born again people who had received the gospel for the first time.

Now the biggest challenge is in relation to the church's new warehouse. The church needs a financial miracle to pay for their new building.



[instagram.com/churchraizes](https://www.instagram.com/churchraizes)
[facebook.com/ChurchRaizes](https://www.facebook.com/ChurchRaizes)

Reaching
Nations

REACHING THE NATIONS AT A TIME OF INTERNATIONAL UNREST

Jon Le Tocq



Perhaps because I was raised by parents who lived through Nazi Occupation during WW2, I grew up with a strong belief that when life becomes stressful, painful and beset by changing circumstances beyond our control, faith in Jesus can shine brighter than ever and the grace of the Gospel flourish in unexpected ways. My aunt kept a journal throughout the Occupation in Guernsey; it is filled with earnest prayers and amazing answers to prayer. Early on she writes of Guernsey being bombed in 1940, how she, her parents, her sister, and several friends were at home when the air raid sirens sounded. They all huddled together downstairs in the hallway. They heard and felt the bombs dropping at the harbour and feared for their lives. She began to sing a hymn, the others joined in. In the margin of her journal my aunt notes that her resistant-hearted friend whom she'd been praying for "came to Christ" that day.

There was tragedy too as dozens of Guernsey civilians lost their lives; my father witnessed his cousin crushed to death. But whilst war and international crises bring out the worst, they can also bring out the best. It is in that mixture of corporate pain and prayer that perhaps we get thrown on to God in ways which normal life doesn't regularly offer us. Certainly, human sin and frailty are seen more explicitly, but people also cry out more desperately to God, and miracles happen.

Some of us are clearly living in such times today. Maybe we are all beginning to feel a bit like that: unless you act and intervene, O Lord, we are without hope. That's actually a good place to be!

“

There are many
of us that are willing to do
great things for the Lord, but few
of us are willing to do
little things.

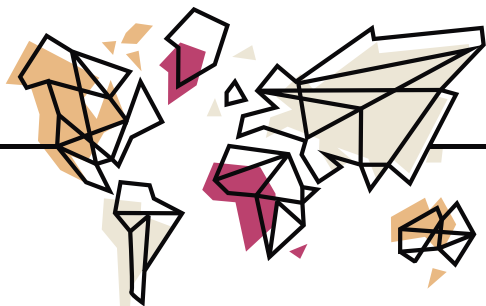
The Russian invasion of Ukraine and subsequent effects of war in Europe, after long decades of peace, has shaken us all. But we are beginning to see the church of Jesus at its truest and best: Christians have been at the forefront of humanitarian aid, homes have opened swiftly to refugees

and incredible sums of money have been raised rapidly. This is where family really counts: our relationship as an apostolic family within Newfrontiers has proven so as large donations and funds continue to flow to help those in need, Polish churches are being assisted in their efforts to care for the millions who have crossed the border, and further west we are also opening our borders and homes to refugees.

We have seen multiple convoys of aid sent from related churches and teams from our churches in the Netherlands, for example, swiftly mobilised and sent to help receiving churches near the Ukrainian border. Christians suddenly thrown together, sharing in hard work and tears, acts of mercy, voluntary service, able to deploy and organise themselves rapidly, despite often not knowing each other or speaking the same language. How come? Because we are truly related, we share the same big brother, Jesus; in such times the family of God can be discerned like no other force on earth.



I have been amazed by our New Ground French churches, many of whom are young plants with only small memberships, who have quickly responded to the need. Our Fireplace Church in Paris, with only a few hours' notice, mobilised help for Ukrainians arriving not knowing where to go, with nowhere to sleep and multiple forms to fill in. Others continue to host families and individuals. A prophetic missional movement is also emerging to 'plant new churches' where Christian refugees have ended up and to prepare to re-evangelise right across Europe! Amen! Bring it on, I say.



In the political world I have been beset with sanction measures against Russian assets regularly needing my sign-off. But even this has reminded me of an important principle. A few months after we began our sanctions regime as a government, a Christian friend who lives in Crimea alerted me to a Russian government communiqué stating that Russia was forthwith declaring Guernsey an “unfriendly state”. The Bailiwick of Guernsey is a few tiny rocks, not even discernible on a map which includes the Russian Federation! Yet we are clearly able to make an impact despite our relative size.

That’s the point: it doesn’t matter how small you feel you are, each of us can make a difference when we act. With faith in a great God it becomes the David and Goliath principle. And when we all act together as “little rocks” in his hands, giants will come tumbling down.

D L Moody once said, “There are many of us that are willing to do great things for the Lord, but few of us are willing to do little things”. It seems to me that an army of Jesus followers willing to do the little things is the need of the hour, and with faith in a great God and filled with his Spirit, such an army will reach the nations and turn the world upside down, just as our forefathers did in the first century.



REACHING NATIONS PLEASE PRAY

- For Agape Community Church in Iracemapolis.
- For Raizes Church in Piracicaba, particularly for financial blessing to pay for their new building.
- For an end to the conflict in Ukraine.
- For the churches in Poland and around the world serving refugees from Ukraine and other nations.



Reaching
Nations

A DUTCH SPEAKING CHURCH

Bram Kersten



My wife Lisanne and I have two beautiful daughters, Joy (8) and Naomi (5). It has been a massive blessing being part of Redeemer International Church in The Hague. We have been part of Redeemer from the start, 12 years ago. Throughout these years we have seen the grace of God in so many areas. We have seen people of many nationalities joining Redeemer and we have really been an international congregation, but we have also seen many Dutch people join us.

was our turn, we had several prophetic words of God putting a desire into our hearts, but thinking we couldn't do it and even that people around us had said 'no'. It was super clear that God had something in store for us. Even with this clarity, we still thought we were not the right people, however God graciously kept confirming that He wanted us to start a Dutch speaking church in The Hague. Eventually we said yes to God and shared our hearts with the eldership team. They were full of joy and we started thinking and praying towards it.



Stepping out in the gifts that God has given us is so important, as it serves to build up and encourage the church.

As elders in The Hague, we have felt God speaking to us for a long time already about starting something in Dutch in The Hague. Up until the start of 2022 it has felt like a 'not yet' thing, so we kept on praying!

Just before Covid Lisanne started longing to be part of a Dutch speaking church. For her personally, but also for our daughters, connecting with God in Dutch is much easier than in English. I didn't really feel the same because I loved the international vibe. But God started to do something in both of us. My heart kept beating for my Dutch speaking neighbours, the parents at school and in general the people in the area that we live, Ypenburg.

During the Covid-19 pandemic we started streaming services from Redeemer in English and Dutch and we had the privilege of hosting some of these services. We absolutely loved it, so our heart for the Dutch speaking church kept growing and we started praying for a new church. We wanted to be part of it, but we were very clear that we did not want to lead it, because we did not feel able to. We even had conversations with people who confirmed it might not be the best thing for us.

In November 2021 we had an evening as elders and wives with a few prophetic people from the UK (that we had never met) sharing what God had said to them about each couple (they just had our names). When it

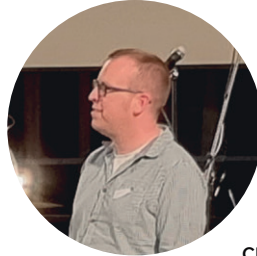
By the time this magazine comes out, we will have started a Dutch speaking church in Ypenburg, the area of The Hague where we live. We are so looking forward to seeing what God does in the lives of the people around us. We already have great men, women and kids joining us who have this same heart. One of the things I am really passionate about is to see young people come to know Jesus and see them involved in church life – a genuine part of the church family.

I would love to encourage you to listen to what God is saying and obey what God is calling you to do. Stepping out in the gifts that God has given us is so important, as it serves to build up and encourage the church. It is such a blessing being part of a wider church family that loves Jesus, the Bible and steps out in the gifts of the Spirit.



NO LONGER A CHURCH PLANT

Gordon Rouse



At King's Church West Lothian, we believe God has called us to be 'here for Jesus, here for one another, and here for those in need'. So here we are in West Lothian, located between Glasgow and Edinburgh. This region has Scotland's youngest and fastest growing population, but it also has a rich historical heritage. It's the birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots and has been home to royalty. It's also where the world's oil industry was born. West Lothian has the hard work and friendliness often associated with Glasgow, but is located closer to, and lives in the shadow of, Edinburgh.



Our church family is made up of around 50 adults and 30 children. We are led by four elders – Luke, Dave, Mike and Gordon. Our Sunday gatherings take place in a small town called Uphall. When Covid-19 restrictions eased, the community centre we called home, in the town of Livingston, was closed down for a three-year emergency building project. Despite our best efforts, and a sense of God with us, we don't yet have a place to meet that works well for us, but we trust God has placed us where he wants us.

This has been a hard season. Our church family have faced various trials and challenges over recent months and, like many, we have found our recovery from the pandemic to be slow, unpredictable and disruptive, particularly alongside a surprise relocation.

This year, we've been grateful for a fantastic Easter event, including a community barbecue and treasure hunt. A number of our young, previously unemployed guys have recently been doing brilliantly in their first jobs. Two are now growing food for the West Lothian Foodbank, so we're seeing God provide for them and for those in need in our

community. Before the summer, we relaunched our midweek gathering with some great times of worship, prayer and Bible study, with many of our church members serving and leading. These evenings had a real sense of the Spirit at work, as we met together. We've also been working with a local Christian youth work project to reach local teenagers for Jesus, which saw five come to faith this summer. God is here and is answering our prayers.

There is a sense of faith and an expectation that God will use us in the season ahead. We're about to start gathering in home groups again and later in the year we'll run smaller 'discipleship pods', to help our diverse church bless one another and continue into maturity. We are exploring how we might bless our neighbourhood in the coming winter, working alongside others.

A lot has changed since we were planted. We are seeing many more people from the local area – those who pray or serve are much more likely to have a West Lothian accent now than before! Our four elders increasingly bear the weight together as a team, relying less on one person, or one couple to shoulder it all. We are also partnering with CAP (Christians Against Poverty), West Lothian Foodbank and the local youth work project, to work together blessing our community.



Like many, we have found our recovery from the pandemic to be slow, unpredictable and disruptive, particularly alongside a surprise relocation.

A few years ago, we sensed God leading us to be 'less like a cinema and more like a family meal'. Like any large family meal, a successful gathering includes lots of voices, a fair bit of laughter, possibly some tears, but most importantly gathering around tables to open the Bible, listen, pray, talk and eat, as we meet with one another and with God. We're so grateful for these habits and values established in the early days – time together, getting into the Bible, Spirit-filled worship, intimate connection with God and caring for one another. It continues to be vital that we root ourselves in God, stay open to godly input, and hold on to what God has called us here for: for Jesus, for one another and for those in need.

UPDATE ON CHURCH PLANTING IN THE FRANCOPHONE WORLD

Jon Le Tocq



We have seen some exciting things happening amongst our French-speaking church plants, along with the obvious challenges that accompany the spiritual warfare of what is effectively threatening the gates of hell! God has been answering prayers, stretching our faith again and opening up new opportunities. There isn't room to detail all that's going on, but here are some snapshots:

Late last year we were pleased to add a new church plant in the Paris region. Kévin Batista leads Église Expansion in the town of Mantes-La-Jolie, a north-eastern suburb of Paris. An area where there is much ethnic diversity, the group meets regularly now and has been very effective in reaching the Islamic community. After significant growth and much prayer, early this summer they saw God open up the door (quite literally!) when suitable premises became available which will facilitate future growth. They are starting to put them to good effect.

It was a joy to see three elders recognised and appointed at Église Fireplace in Paris and for them to become a fully-fledged church a few months ago. They are continuing to see growth and, as a city centre church, really need a bigger and more permanent home. Please join us in praying for miraculous provision!

Our church plant in Roanne, a market town north-west of Lyon, has been making the gospel known through serving children and families in their community. They were offered a disused, large Catholic church facility and are in the throes of arranging to use it on a permanent basis.

It was good to spend some time recently with the growing group in Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët (Normandy) as they celebrated the baptisms of new believers. The group was established a few years back by the church in Rennes (Brittany). They now are on the cusp of becoming an independent church with their own eldership.

Our church plant in Nantes has seen significant growth since it first began as a 'projet' only three years ago. The challenge now is to find a suitable meeting place for upwards of 30 people.

Premises and facilities for meeting and ministry are always a key obstacle in church growth in France where, by law, no government or public building can be used for religious purposes, excluding all but private schools, which tend to be Roman Catholic in any case. Please

therefore pray for our church plants in the francophone world as they grow and mature and face such challenges.



PLANTING CHURCHES PLEASE PRAY

- That God will lead Bram and Lisanne Kersten in The Hague and the leaders of all our church plants by His Spirit.
- That the Dutch church plant will see many people get to know Him and live for Him.
- For premises and facilities for meeting and ministry.
- For a bigger and more permanent home for Église Fireplace in Paris.
- For the healthy growth of all our church plants.

Planting
Churches

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