

GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

Harvest 2016: FREE

Inside

Hold the press - 3
Youth champion - 4
Newday rocks - 5
World mission - 10
Pope's support - 12



New minister welcomed to Norwich Elim



Nick and Lesley Whipps.

■ Nick Whipps was welcomed as the new minister of Norwich Elim Church on Trory Street on June 25 at an induction service officiated by Elim's regional leader, Rev Dave Campbell.

Nick takes responsibility for the church following periods of pastoring in Sheffield and Loughborough. Married to Lesley, the couple have three adult children Matt, Rachel and Josh.

Some 19 years of Nick's working life was spent in a civilian capacity with the Metropolitan, Essex and Cheshire Police forces before leaving his home city of Chelmsford in 2007 to pursue training at Regent's Theological College in Nantwich, Cheshire.

Nick was ordained by Elim in June 2011 at their annual conference. He says that he is looking forward to the opportunities that lie ahead of him, and is greatly encouraged by the existing ministries that Norwich Elim undertake in the community and to the city.

"I'm excited by the potential that exists here at Norwich Elim," said Nick. "There is good outreach work that engages with the community already. I am keen to build relationships and trust with those in the immediate community and encourage those already following Jesus to reveal Him to everyone they come in contact with."

www.norwichelim.co.uk

Suicide survivor Steve is mental health champion

Steve Foyster, manager of Norwich's Christian resource centre – **Revelation** – has become an ardent champion for mental health sufferers after his life was marked and changed following the 'miraculous' survival of an attempted suicide. **Sandie Shirley** reports.

Steve jumped from the top of a multi-storey city car park 30 years ago. That terrible event, after a year of pain, loss and depression, has forged empathy and concern for others that is being outworked decades later as the scars have healed and life is restored.

Steve hosts regular evenings at Revelation that look at the thorny issues of mental health such as suicide. The events are a platform for understanding and shared experience, attracting eminent authorities and those of faith and no faith.

Steve has also talked about his experiences with 60 junior doctors as part of a training seminar and recently trained as a peer tutor with the Recovery College - part of the Norfolk and Suffolk Mental Health Trust.

As a tutor, he re-tells his story of desperation that has turned to hope and purpose, to enlighten small groups of sufferers. He recalls the sorrows and joys; the therapies and the hindrances, so others can relate and open up as a way of healing.

Now he is busy finishing a book about his life story as a suicide survivor and drawing a parallel with Christ's suffering. "I wrote the first half in two days, a year after my attempted suicide – it was very cathartic," says Steve.

His failed suicide meant six months in hospital with eight weeks in traction as he recovered from a punctured lung, multiple ankle fractures, a ruptured sciatic nerve and vertebrae compaction.



Steve Foyster at the Revelation Christian resource centre in Norwich.

I was told I would never walk again or have children but my survival and turnaround has been hailed as miraculous by a former GP,

explains Steve who has since remarried and has two grown-up sons.

■ Continues on page 4



Brian Sumner at Eaton Park in Norwich.

Skateboarding pastor drops in to Norwich skate park

■ Professional skateboarder and church pastor Brian Sumner dropped into Eaton skatepark in Norwich on August 14 during a whistle-stop UK tour to promote the sport to young athletes.

Brian, who was born in Liverpool, moved to America aged 15 to pursue the sport and went on to become a professional, competing for top skateboarding companies.

He was at Eaton Park skatepark with Stephen Nowak, a former UK skateboard champion, who is now a Baptist church minister in Stowmarket, to demonstrate and chat with the youngsters at the park.

He said that his visit blended both his love for the sport and his Christian faith.

"I've been visiting different churches and skate parks to share the gospel, see what's going on and do some tricks with the people who are there," he said. "We've had a great reaction so far."

Edward Land, curate at St Thomas Church in Norwich, who was involved in organising the event, said: "It was great to have Brian at the skatepark, to watch him skate and hear his story of what God has done in his life and how he has been led to share his faith amongst the skateboarding community."

GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

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■ Advertising: Helen Baldry (01603) 926120

■ Distribution: Les Champion (01603) 402310

■ Editor and designer: Keith Morris

■ Regular writers: Kevin Gotts, Mike Wiltshire, Sandie Shirley, Helen Baldry, Les Champion, Jenny Seal.

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Harvest can be a time of real struggle

■ Very recently I had the privilege of visiting Kenya in my role with Christian Aid and met a remarkable woman called Rodah.

In Kenya, harvest can often be a time of real struggle. Climate change is making it harder for poor farmers like Rodah to survive.

For many years she tried to grow vegetables on a small plot of dry land. Every day she walked a gruelling six miles, carrying back heavy containers of water, just to keep her crops alive.

Despite her hard work, Rodah's harvest was never enough. She had to make the agonising decision to feed her family rather than pay for her children to go to school. She felt terrible that she couldn't educate her children.

But since Christian Aid reached Rodah's community, things have changed.

In a river running near her house, Christian



Simon Snell, from Christian Aid in Norfolk

rainfall for months, turning river beds into dry ribbons of sand. Simply by putting walls deep into the rivers, water collects in the sand behind the dam. People like Rodah can then use it in their homes and to water their crops.

Now Rodah has the precious water she needs to nurture her land. She has expanded her garden to produce enough food to eat, with surplus to sell, and these days she's even able to provide casual work for her neighbours - helping her entire community to thrive.

At last Rodah can afford to send her children to school, giving them lots of opportunities for the future.

This harvest, many churches across Norfolk will be showing the love of Christ and making a difference to some of the poorest communities across the world through Christian Aid.

www2.christianaid.org.uk/harvestappeal

Aid built the community a "sand dam" through our trusted local partner.

In these parts of Kenya, there can be no

To Romania with love

More than 15 tons of aid to help struggling communities and churches in rural Romania has been collected and delivered by big-hearted South African Christians in Norfolk over the past two years. Mike Wiltshire reports.

Now they are gearing up for another South African Festival, an annual fund-raising event at Hethersett Village Hall, six miles south-west of Norwich, on Sunday, September 18. Everyone is welcome.

'Loving by Giving' is the festival theme in support of churches and worthy causes in Romania and other nations - 'to relieve poverty, build communities and give hope.'

Encouraged by their energetic pastor and life-coach, Dr Jaco Beukes and his wife, Eldre, the inter-denominational South African Congregation which partners with the LBG (Loving by Giving) Fellowship, meets regularly at West Costessey Hall, Queens Hills, NR8 5BP at 10am on Sundays. Dr Jaco, who preaches in English rather than Afrikaans, adds: "We are really here in Norwich for 'everyone' - not just for those of us with South African backgrounds."

Members and friends have achieved remarkable goals in providing overseas aid - for



South African Christians in Norwich loading up a 10-ton truck with aid for churches in poverty-stricken areas of Romania, surrounded by storage containers.

example, a 10-ton truck-load of clothing, toys and bicycles was sent to Romania, where they also help to build churches in areas of extreme poverty and reach out in evangelistic projects.

Working alongside other churches in support of the Besom project in Norwich, (moto: 'sweep away suffering'), the South African church has supplied backpack 'survival kits' for homeless people in need, plus support for water aid projects in Tanzania.

"People across East Anglia are amazingly generous - they just give in abundance," says Dr Jaco, who has just returned from another trip to Romania where they support church planting projects.

For seven years, Dr Jaco, who is well-trained in social care as well as theology, worked with the Norwich-based Matthew Project, which provides advice and support services for people facing drug and alcohol problems. As a

life-coach, he has a strong interest in 'inspiring and empowering people - and helping those who are hurting to find recovery in fulfilled lives.'

He says the church is always looking for storage space in Norwich as friends gather more aid to send to Romania where they work in partnership with the global mission group, Operation Mobilisation. Any suggestions for storage space can be emailed to: jaco@lovingbygiving.com

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Press man is new Rev

A former press photographer has recently moved to **Norwich** to help lead a group of Norwich churches. **Mike Wiltshire** reports.

John Potter's career as a press photographer and picture editor was inspired in his boyhood by a talented uncle, Vaughan, who had an antique glass-plate camera, used in the First World War.

His uncle was a skilled artist who also hand-tinted his historic black-and-white pictures.

After John left school, he also became a gifted photographer and, in his work for the regional and national press, took many pictures of pop culture as well the royal family.

Today, John, now 55, has a very different role from the hectic world of photo-journalism, and was inducted as a minister with the Norwich area United Reformed Church team at a service at a packed Ipswich Road URC on July 30.

As a press photographer in his late 20s, John sensed a very different calling on his life. He had grown up in a God-fearing family and, in younger years had made a firm Christian commitment. It had not been an easy path because John, in his early years, had many questions about the debate between science and the Biblical world view.

While working in the Midlands, John attended the well-known Carrs Lane Church in Birmingham where he met Pauline, an English teacher, who is now his wife. They were both involved in leading services and, after their marriage, Pauline went on to train for the ministry with the United Reformed Church (URC) which has around 1,400 congregations in the UK.

John says he had the privilege of sitting in on some of the lectures at Westminster College in Cambridge, where Pauline trained. In the year 2000, the family moved to Gloucester where Pauline was ordained.

By then John also recognised his own calling into full-time Christian ministry, so in 2002 he began a four-year course at Queen's Theological College, Birmingham.

In 2007, John was called to an ecumenical team ministry in Thamesmead, in south-east



New Norwich area URC minister Rev John Potter at his induction service.

London and then, in 2011, John and Pauline began a shared ministry with a group of churches in Leicester. Following the merger of congregations in 2015, John continued to serve that pastorate as sole minister.

In July, John was inducted as a minister within the Norwich Area URC team. He said: "I am very excited about being here. I am looking forward to supporting Ipswich Road URC's involvement in the community on Eaton Rise and Tuckwood. I'm also looking forward to helping the Princes Street URC congregation develop a vibrant ministry based in the redeveloped building in the city centre."

John says his son, Daniel, now 18, is also "an extremely good photographer" – he is also a keen classicist with a love of Roman history and science-fiction.

John also retains a keen interest in photography and supplies pictures for the Bible Society's devotional resources. John also enjoys cinema, music and playing the djembe, the West African hand-drum – he was once part of 'Rhythms of Worship,' a Christian drumming group.

The Norwich Area URC churches also include Trinity and St Peter's Jessopp Road (URC/Methodist), as well as Wymondham, Wroxham, Hoveton and Mattishall.



Trio ride between prisons to raise cash for Genesis

■ Three cyclists, including prison chaplain Mark Bredin, have completed a 200-mile ride around Norfolk from HMP Norwich to HMP Wayland to raise money for Christian charity House of Genesis to purchase a third house to provide a supportive home for homeless ex-prisoners.

Mark Louther and Oren Souter also spent four days cycling around Norfolk, led by Mark, a Quaker chaplain at HMP Wayland. All money raised will go towards an additional house for the House of Genesis, which continues to successfully house men on release from the Norfolk prisons.

They were "released" at HMP Norwich by the governor, Will Styles, with the Chaplain praying for their safety and success. Other prison staff and Genesis staff and trustees were also present to see them off, and a trumpet fanfare saw them on their way. From Norwich, the group headed to King's Lynn, Martham, Walcott, Sheringham and Wells and finished outside Wayland Prison on Thursday, August 25.

The House of Genesis is seeking to raise £25,000 towards the setting up of a third house in Norwich for homeless ex-prisoners, adding to the £50,000 it has already received.

Val Dodsworth, co-founder and trustee of the House of Genesis, said: "The House of Genesis has been providing supportive homes for the past 16 years, for homeless men, and especially those who leave prison with nowhere to go. We are now looking to provide a third house and another five or six places, to add to the 10 we have."

"Last year the charity opened a house on Dereham Road and since then we have taken Community Chaplaincy Norfolk, under our wing offering a mentoring and befriending service to former prisoners who need that sort of help to turn their lives around."

www.thehouseofgenesis.org

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Suicide survivor Steve is mental health champion

Continued from front page

Steve's mental health began to improve when he found someone who would listen to him. "The weekly one-to-one sessions with a student psychiatric nurse were very beneficial," he says.

Meanwhile his Christian faith developed and when he was confirmed and later joined a small church Bible study he learnt about the suffering of others. "I realised everyone had been broken at some time in their lives," says Steve.

"Over the years I have been helped by hundreds of people. The many things that have happened to me cannot have been coincidental – they have changed my path so maybe I am now meant to be in a position to help others."

Steve doesn't draw a veil over his past. "It is incredibly important to raise awareness of mental ill health and break down the taboos which still exist. The

night before I jumped I was waiting for a bus at Castle Meadow (Norwich). I had walked that street thousands of times before but I did not know where home was although home is where the heart is; I felt completely lost with no security and no boundaries. I no longer had the capacity to love anyone, least of all myself."

Continues Steve: "Mental health issues never leave completely but I am learning to stay away from the 'black hole' of past trauma with the help of cognitive therapy and the use of an eight-week Mindfulness course about choosing to live in the moment – which is essentially what Jesus asks us to do."

Steve trained as a book seller but spent six years working for Suffolk Social Services prior to becoming manager of Norwich's SPCK shop at Pottergate, 12 years after his suicide attempt. "I had to walk past the car park where I attempted to take my own life but I figured God knew I was ready to face the daily emotional reminder – timing is always important for what we do," says Steve.



Future of Tim's youth work vision secured

The future of the visionary work of Christian young people's champion Tim Stapleford at the Jenny Lind Park in Norwich has been secured.

Working with Holy Trinity church and others, Tim organized football sessions for young people at the Jenny Lind Park and spearheaded the work of converting the old Post Office in Vauxhall Street into a community hub.

Enough money has now been raised, including donations of £4,592 at and following Tim's memorial service, to cover the costs of renting and managing the property through to the end of the lease in February 2018.

A management committee has been formed to take forward the work and Bidy Collyer, chairman of the Christian Community Trust for Norwich and Norfolk, which holds the lease, said: "Young people already enjoy the opportunity to play board games there after the football on the park on Tuesdays.

"The vision is that other groups will be able to hire it for sessions during the week and provide other opportunities for outreach into the community.

"Over the next few months, the management committee will be working towards charitable

status and Sue, Tim's widow, has agreed to be a trustee once it is formed."

Sue said: "I am delighted that Tim's work is to continue, it would have been a tragedy if it had stopped. This work was Tim's calling. He saw himself as someone who started things, and always intended to step back once the project was established, handing on the reins to someone else. I'm particularly pleased that our daughter Gemma is involved in the weekly sessions: Tim was proud of all our children, but took a special pleasure in seeing her share his vision."

Tributes paid to young people's champion

Tributes have been paid to former deputy head teacher, founder of the **Norfolk Christian Football Youth League** and Norwich Christian community activist, **Tim Stapleford**. **Keith Morris** reports.

Tim (55) passed away on June 22 at home in Cringleford in the arms of his devoted wife of 27 years Sue, after a brave year-long battle against neuro-endocrine cancer.

Sue said: "We truly believed Tim would be healed in this life, but God's purpose was for him to die today. We have been surrounded by love and grace for the last year, and hope has kept us strong. Of course, I'm devastated but relieved that his pain is over. God has been our rock. Tim has served Him faithfully and I have been truly blessed to have shared my life with him."

The couple met at Holy Trinity church in Norwich in November 1987, married in October 1988 and have four children, Katrina, Deborah, Gemma and Daniel, all born between 1993 and 1999.

Tim taught at Wroughton Middle and was deputy head of Attleborough Junior between 1996 and 2008. He then became a supply teacher for St Francis Primary in Norwich.

The couple worshipped at Holy Trinity until last year when they moved to St Stephen's in



Tim and Sue Stapleford.

Norwich city centre.

Tim was perhaps best known for his key role in the development of the Norfolk Christian Football League, and especially its Youth League, which started in 1995 because of Tim's vision and passion.

Many children in churches found it difficult to play competitive football as it took place on a Sunday morning. The youth league, played on a Saturday morning, provided that opportunity and it now comprises almost 30 teams and around 300 players.

Tim was involved in the league for almost 30 years and fulfilled almost every possible role as league chairman, vice chairman, referee, team manager and player for Holy Trinity. In 2012 he was awarded the league's Sam Hollinger Trophy for his long service. In 2012 Tim was also nominated to be one of the Olympic Torch bearers.

League chairman, Mike Culwick, paid tribute, saying: "Tim has been an inspiration for so many of us in the league, as founder of the youth league in 1995, and without him I don't think the Christian League could have survived. His faith continued to amaze us all."

A year after the London Olympic Games Tim was the driving force behind a Community Games event in Norwich, organised by Holy

Trinity for which he was given a Shining Light Award which he received in person from London Olympics chairman Lord Sebastian Coe.

The event was held at the Jenny Lind Park and the nearby Bignold School field and was part of an initiative started by Holy Trinity for the Vauxhall Street area of its parish.

Tim's commitment to the outreach work in the Jenny Lind Park was acknowledged in October 2014 when he was presented with the Norfolk Police Community Citizen of the Year award at the Norfolk Safer Community Awards.

Tim organised weekly football sessions, with the support of Holy Trinity Church, the police and Norwich City Council at the Jenny Lind Park in Norwich for local eight to 25 year-olds. The project was a resounding success, with positive relationships forged between the young people and the organisations involved, and a proven reduction in anti-social behaviour. Tim was a key part of a dedicated team committed to social outreach in the area which included taking out a tenancy agreement on the old post office opposite the park as a base.

Tim was also a key organiser of the Dove Men's Christian Fellowship which has met in Norwich city centre over many years.

A packed memorial service for Tim was held at Holy Trinity in Norwich on July 28.

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Newday rocks Norfolk

Over 6,000 young people camped at the **Royal Norfolk Showground** for Christian youth festival, **Newday** in August, enjoying high quality teaching, passionate worship and exciting entertainment. **Jenny Seal** reports.

With tents stretched out as far as the eye can see, the Norfolk showground was home to over 6,300 young people aged 12-19 for a week in August. They came from 185 Christian youth groups across the country and beyond; some travelling from as far as Holland, Germany and South Africa.

They enjoyed the opportunity to give their lives to God and to grow on that journey, encouraged by engaging speakers, powerful worship, amazing testimonies, a varied programme of seminars and a festival atmosphere promoting fun and friendship.

It is a massive operation with high standards of care and security. Almost 800 volunteers give up their holiday and free time to come and serve the young people, including a medical team with A&E doctors and nurses.

In the mornings, separate meetings are run for 12-14s and 15-19s. This time of worship and teaching is followed by a choice of nine seminar streams, which aim to appeal to a wide spectrum of young people at different points on their Christian journey.

There are streams for those exploring the Christian faith, for those who want to delve into tough issues, and for those seeking to practically put their faith into action through an Outreach Bootcamp which prepares young people to evangelise on the streets of Norwich at the end of the week. And new to Newday this year is a seminar stream designed to equip and resource youth leaders themselves.

The afternoons pass with a mix of sport, skate competitions, workshops in music production, vlogging and break dance, manicures and Nerf games.

Then the Big Top event in the evening brings everyone together. Inside the giant blue tent are thousands of young people dressed mainly in shorts, sitting on cushions under strings of lights and in front of big screens and a well-lit stage.

High energy, passionate worship is led by the Newday band including worship leaders Simon Brading and Sam and Becki Cox who introduce their own, purpose-written songs as well as



The Newday Christian festival attracted over 6,000 young people to the Royal Norfolk Showground in August.



sharing others contemporary songs that are recognisable to many churches.

Healing is a regular part of the Big Top meetings. One evening the well-known Christian speaker, Adrian Holloway led a time of healing, interviewing six people who shared their experiences of being healed at Newday last year, many clutching written verification from their medical professionals.

He then led the tent in times of prayer for those needing healing, encouraging those who had been prayed for to test out whether they had been healed. Chris Hedges, a physiotherapist with Norwich City Academy, testified that he had been suffering from plantar fasciitis, a disorder affecting the heel and bottom of the foot, and now felt no pain.

On that same evening, worship leader and singer Lou Fellingham, gave the main talk inspiring the young people to take hold of God's amazing plans for their lives. In an accessible, easy to understand, chatty street style Lou used the story of David and Goliath to encourage the thousands of young people to be the people that God had made them to be and to follow their God given purpose.

She said: "God is a creative God. He didn't make us all the same. God

actually thought about you. He put every single part of you together. There may be things that people don't get about you. But God has woven you together."

Following the evening meetings the concourse outside the Big Top comes alive with fairy lights and lanterns, surrounded by a range of venues and cafes to chill out in, including The Cow Shed which will make 10,000 milkshakes during the week. Young people can spend their evenings in the Nerf arena, playing on the dodgems, watching vintage films on a big screen cinema or dancing in the Rhythm Factory which hosts artists such as Guvna B, or spend time in the creative prayer space or peruse the bookshop.

And once things begin to close down at 11.15pm youth leaders can sleep soundly knowing that great care is taken to make sure the site is safe, secure and a night patrol are always on hand to help any young people who stray from their tents.

Many Norfolk church youth groups take advantage of having such a major Christian resource on their doorstep. If you would like to know more about how to attend Newday 2017 on Monday, July 31 – Saturday, August 5 go to www.newdaygeneration.org.



Jan consecrated as Bishop of Repton

■ The former Archdeacon of Norwich, Jan McFarlane was consecrated as Bishop of Repton by the Archbishop of Canterbury (pictured above) on June 29 in Canterbury Cathedral.

Bishop Jan is the sixth Suffragan Bishop of Repton in the Diocese of Derby and the ninth female Church of England bishop.

The Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd Graham James, said: "Jan McFarlane is known throughout Norfolk and Waveney because of her many appearances on local and regional media. Her ability to express her Christian faith so winningly and to connect with people will make her a fine bishop too. We will miss her greatly but are glad to make such a wonderful gift to the Diocese of Derby.

"It's thrilling to see Jan consecrated at Canterbury Cathedral, surrounded by crowds of family, friends and colleagues who admire and love her. She will continue to be a great blessing to God's Church."

Jan will be welcomed to the Diocese of Derby at a special service in Derby Cathedral during September.

Jan said: "It's difficult to put into words just what an awe-inspiring and emotional service we had in the beautiful and historic Canterbury Cathedral. I'm very grateful to all those who came along to support me on such a momentous occasion, and I'm greatly looking forward to beginning my new ministry in Derbyshire."

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Cedric and Chris Poole in Norwich.

Marking year at Norwich church

■ South African minister, and former dentist, **Cedric Poole** is marking one year in **Norwich leading Meadow Way Chapel. Les Champion** reports.

■ Cedric, his wife Chris and youngest daughter Abigail, arrived in the UK from South Africa early in November 2015, in order for Cedric to take up an invitation from Meadow Way Chapel (MWC) in Hellesdon, to become their Lead Elder.

Cedric and Chris are no strangers to the UK, having visited extended family here many times over the years. The difference now is the conviction that God intends them to settle and serve Him here long term.

Cedric, aged 56, has lived through the worst years of apartheid in South Africa, an experience few of us would relish. He likes to meet people at Costa Coffee shops, and was glad to find one opening in Hellesdon just as he arrived. Chris is British, but born in Rhodesia. The couple like walking, cycling, reading, and Cedric particularly, a former dentist with his own practice, enjoys the world of medical ethics. Chris has a nursing background and works at a local care home.

Cedric and Chris feel their calling is to work and minister into a smaller community-based church and the area it serves. MWC was born in 1971 with that servant ethos and has been doing it consistently and outstandingly over the 45 years of its existence. However, MWC elders felt it was time to bring some fresh vision and direction into the church, and last year set about praying and looking for someone to bring that.

In order to best get to know the people he is serving since he has arrived, Cedric has visited most of the church family in their own homes. He has found an appetite to explore in teaching and practice, all that God has been saying to His Church in the latter part of the 20th and early 21st century.

As a gifted Bible teacher, and with the support of his fellow elders, he plans to develop that with good sound teaching from the Word of God.

Since February 2008, the Sunday morning All Age Worship service has been held in Hellesdon Community Centre (HCC) due to the increase in the number attending the church.

The church intends to keep its focus on outward mission (an Alpha course is planned later this year) but not at the expense of ongoing growth in personal discipleship. In so doing, the church also feels the need to develop its service and facilities for the community, and for some time, they have been exploring other possibilities in the area.

Cedric regularly prays for Hellesdon and Norwich with a large map on his wall to focus his attention: "As I've studied that map, Reepham Road and Middleton Lane stand out very clearly as a cross over the city and Meadow Way Chapel is at the heart of that cross, proclaiming Christ to Hellesdon and the city," he said.

Celebrate broa

Celebrate Norfolk's flagship event at the Forum in **Norwich** on June 11 and 12 has been broadening its horizons while Celebrate has also spread its wings to **King's Lynn** and the **Royal Norfolk Show**. **Keith Morris and Jenny Seal** report.

Two dozen Christian organisations demonstrated and celebrated the Christian community in action in a major exhibition inside and outside the Forum in Norwich city centre on Saturday June 11.

Outside, on Millennium Plain, there was drama from Saltmine Theatre Company and music from a combined 40-strong Norwich churches choir and the Norwich YFC Tracks performance zone.

Opening the all-day event, Celebrate project director John Betts said: "This is a breakthrough year in the work of the Kingdom of God as demonstrated by our exhibitors and the vital work they do to serve the community in so many ways."

Lord Mayor of Norwich, Cllr Marion Maxwell, visited the exhibition, and said: "I am really pleased that I was asked to come along to Celebrate as it has broadened my horizons. I had no idea of the sort of things I have seen here today were going on through the Christian community and it was absolutely fabulous. I have really been educated. I did not realise the depth of how some of the exhibitors here are reaching out to people and I have learnt an awful lot."

On Sunday June 12, a free picnic for volunteers of Christian projects across Norfolk was held at the Narthex at St John the Baptist Catholic Cathedral in Norwich, followed by the Celebrate closing service in the Cathedral itself with testimonies from exhibitors.

The inaugural Celebrate King's Lynn took place on Saturday, June 11 in The Walks, a beautiful park in the heart of the town.

Many of the churches and Christian organisations of King's Lynn had come together to stage a free community fun day, blessing



Above, Celebrate Norfolk at the Forum in Norwich, right at the Royal Norfolk Show and, far right, in King's Lynn.

hundreds of people from the local community with live music from local bands, inflatable slides, a vast selection of complimentary cakes, circus skills, bungee runs, sumo wrestling, face-painting, penalty shootouts, bouncy castles, volleyball and displays from King's Lynn American Football Club.

Each church came with a different activity to run. Reffley Community Church of the Nazarene were out in force hosting a coconut shy, a tin can alley, face-painting and a ball throw stall, King's Lynn Baptist Church teamed up with clown Sally Crazy

Bananas, King's Lynn Christian Fellowship ran a mini Olympics, encouraging families to work together to complete a series of fun challenges, St Faith's Church, Gaywood had a display of prayer shawls as well as giant jenga, hook a duck and throwing ping pong balls in a bowl.

Also present with displays were Terrington St Clement Parish Church, St John the Evangelist Church, the King's Glory Centre, the Gateway Church, the Christian Motorcycle Association, King's Lynn Foodbank, King's Lynn CAP Debt Centre, the Salvation Army and the College of West Anglia.

Parish nurses put at heart of the

■ A **Norwich** church is putting parish nurses at the heart of its community. **Helen Baldry** reports.

■ Angela Stewart (Parish Nurse) and Eleanor Laming (Assistant Practitioner) are part of the parish nurse team at St Francis Church on the Heartsease estate in Norwich. They have the unique offer of practical support to people, time to listen and the ability to share their faith as Christian nurses.

The ministry, which was the first of its kind in Norfolk, was established at St Francis Church where Angela is a lay minister, two years ago. Parish nurses often work with a team of volunteers, and there are currently seven members of the team at St Francis. The team is ecumenical, linking the Church of

England with the Salvation Army.

Christian nurses are often wary of sharing their faith because of the fear of being misinterpreted. Parish nurses are unique in the way that they can offer the opportunity for people to explore the spiritual aspects of their health care if they choose to. Angela said, "What we bring is God into the situation. We always ask people if we can pray for them. No-one has ever refused".

The team treat people from all walks of life – from elderly, isolated people with dementia to young families and people who are homeless.

Eleanor said that they regularly meet people with complicated issues, and they can take the approach of whole person health-care, addressing physical, mental, social and spiritual needs. She said, "We have got the time to listen". Eleanor is a qualified

aromatherapist and offers aromatherapy and massage treatment. She has frequently seen people gain confidence as their health improves.

Angela, who trained at the old Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, is a registered nurse and she runs the weekly clinic on Wednesdays as well as regular sessions at the church luncheon club and home visits. She supports team member Diana, to offer ministry for people who have been bereaved. The team are also involved with flower ministry and a craft group run by team member Margaret. Having wifi installed for the service has enabled a computer training club at the church. All of which places them at the heart of the community. They have a good relationship with local health related voluntary organisations and links with the local surgeries and NHS.

Parish Nurses do not offer any clinical treat-

dens horizons



An enlarged Christian presence at the Royal Norfolk Show was hailed a fantastic success.

The Diocese of Norwich doubled the size of its marquee in a new partnership with Celebrate Norfolk, welcoming a number of other Christian organisations within the marquee.

Gordon Darley, Marketing & Communications Manager for the Diocese of Norwich, said: "It has been a fantastic couple of days. We have had thousands of people come in, including many school groups who have come and performed on the stage area including choirs, a steel band and an orchestra. The comments from visitors have been so encouraging and there's been a great buzz about the marquee.

"We've served over 1,750 cups of tea and coffee and the café area has been full throughout the two days. At the centre of the marquee was a large cross sculpture made of hundreds of hand-made nails which has been a great talking point, and there have been different activities for children including a listening station of different church music, Scalextrix track and Messy Church craft activities.

"Welcoming in other Christian organisations has really added something quite fantastic. It celebrates the unity of the church across Norfolk and how willing people are to work with one another. We have been able to engage with people about what the church is really like and many of the proactive activities which local churches and Christian charities provide across the county.

Exhibitors included: YMCA Norfolk, Norwich Cathedral, Norwich Youth for Christ, Rafiki Creative Ministry, the Matthew Project, Mothers' Union, the Christian Conference Trust, Traidcraft, Rural Ministries, Revelation Bookshop, Norwich FGB, Network Norfolk and the Horstead Centre.



community

ments, such as dressings or injections as these are provided by NHS Nurses, but will support people in getting the care they need.

Networking is an important part of the role of parish nurses because they often refer people on to other agencies who can assist them with specific needs, for example if they need help accessing benefits or need support to address addictions.

Support from a parish nurse is available to people of all ages and backgrounds and of all faiths and none. The nurses are employed by the church - some on a part time basis and Angela and Eleanor are keen to promote the concept of parish nursing amongst more churches in Norfolk, of all denominations, and would like to see many more of them begin this work.

To find out more contact Angela on 01603 300916 or parishnurseangela@btinternet.com



Parish Nurse Angela Stewart, left, and Assistant Practitioner Eleanor Laming.

Youth project helps to transform community

■ A Norwich Christian youth project has joined with a local church to undertake social action projects in their community, including litter picking, gardening and building friendly relationships with residents.

In August, ENYP and St Elizabeth's Church joined up together to do some 'mission days' in the Earham area of Norwich. The aim was to be a visible presence in the local area and to make a difference in the communities through practical support and projects.

Young people, volunteers and members of the ENYP team and St Elizabeth's Church took part in various social action projects over the three days including transforming over 20 gardens of elderly people, litter picking key roads in the estate, clearing planting beds and litter picking round a local school and talking to residents in the area.

The mission days were supported by Norwich City Council who were able to help by providing equipment.

Louise Curtis, Community Enabling Officer for Norwich City Council, said, "The ENYP mission days are a great way to get local people involved in their community. The litter pick of Cadge Road by young volunteers sends a really positive message on how they feel about their neighbourhood and helping the tenants of Fellowes Close with their gardens is a lovely way to help others and build friendly relationships."

Those involved had some great conversations with local residents, particularly those who were lonely and socially isolated. It was a great time of breaking down the barriers between generations and of building relationships through conversation and practical support.

Danny Doran-Smith, ENYP Director and Pioneer Minister, said, "it was great to see so many people give up their own time to make such a difference in the community. We're pleased the work received such positive feedback and we look forward to building on this in the future through our Grassroots project."

For more information visit: www.enyp.org.uk

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Couple take over as Army leaders



■ Dussindale Salvation Army welcomed new leaders Russell and Alison Day on July 24 as Kerry Giles retired.

Kerry, who has been responsible for The Salvation Army's church and community outreach in the Dussindale Thorpe St Andrew area for the past 13 years, will continue as a church member.

Highlights of her leadership include starting Sunday worship in the local primary school on Vane Close, offering support to people in the area and working alongside other churches.

Kerry Giles said: "I have really enjoyed getting to know people and offering help, support and friendship. I thank God for the opportunities to serve this community, to lead this church and run outreach activities.

"I have the privilege of staying in the area and will continue to be a part of the family here at Dussindale Salvation Army as a church member. I know that, under the leadership of Russell and Alison, we will continue to show God's love to those around us by offering compassionate support and practical help."

In addition to church services every Sunday, The Salvation Army runs a community cafe, a community choir, Messy Church Family Fun and Thorpe Youth Café for 10-14 year olds.

Russell and Alison Day were formally welcomed as the new leaders of Dussindale Salvation Army on July 24, 10am at a service at Dussindale Primary School.

For more information please contact the Salvation Army on 07900 904128.

Steve's journey of faith offers hope to others

All of us face simple rejections at various times and often we can get over them with no long-term effect. But a traumatic experience of rejection in childhood can trigger a life-long "killer problem," says Steve Mott, a family counsellor and church leader who recently told a Norwich audience how his own early life was crippled by family rejection.

As a boy, his personal world collapsed after a parental divorce - dejected and lonely, he would walk the streets till bedtime - "or do crazy, stupid things, just to win acceptance."

After serving in the Royal Navy (including submarines), Steve's inner journey to recovery really began in 1986 when, at the age of 31, he was invited to a fellowship gathering in a Bowthorpe community hall.

Steve wasn't a churchgoer and had no idea what to expect, but it led to "a life-changing encounter with God's unconditional love".

Eventually, Steve and his wife, Elaine, became involved in helping others in deprived areas, seeing families and communities changed. They knew that rejection can be a springboard to many other issues such as loneliness, low self-esteem, aggression and depression.

Steve and Elaine's work has attracted links with ministries in many nations. Their faith has also sustained them through massive family loss after their son, David, died of lymphoma in 2004 at the age of 22.

He also recalls the time when he had no faith at all and could make no sense of the Bible. Although he knew one verse in Psalm 23 where it said "The Lord is my Shepherd . . ." He wondered what on earth does that mean?

Ray Simpson, the minister at Bowthorpe Church at that time said: "Well, Steve, we'll pray for you . . . that the Holy Spirit will help you understand." And, sure enough, right at the end of the meeting, after tea and biscuits, Ray prayed - "and the power of God shot through his hand".

Steve's new Bible fell on the floor and it fell open at Psalm 23, the famous Shepherd's Psalm - and for Steve this was

A journey of faith has helped Norwich man Steve Mott through childhood rejection and personal tragedy and he is now able to offer help to others facing life's challenges. Mike Wiltshire reports.

the start of "a spiritual voyage of discovery" as he began to read and understand the words of Jesus who said: "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28).

many people" who have faced similar traumas and challenges. "My own life has been transformed," he says. "We've seen miracle after miracle."

As Steve and Elaine grew in faith, they were able to demonstrate family life in their community, seeing local people "restored, released from addictions of many types, and seeing troubled families reunited."

Today, as an experienced church leader, Steve says that deep rejection has a way of destroying a person's life in a way that few other things can - but those who find freedom and healing through the love of God "should also reach out to the hurting people around us and share how we've been healed," he says.



Steve Mott.

The promise in Psalm 147:3 that God will "heal the broken-hearted and bind up their wounds," also became a reality to Steve as he also learned to forgive those who he felt had rejected him.

Now a gifted speaker, Steve is a man with a message. His inspiring story has been "a key that has unlocked the lives of

He adds: "The greatest love story in the world is revealed through the Cross of Jesus - who rose again to set us free from bondage, as we trust in Him."

Steve Mott was speaking at a men's breakfast for the Living Stones Christian Fellowship which now meets at Poringland Community Centre.



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Prison gate mentors

Community Chaplaincy

Norfolk is a Christian service supporting ex-offenders to successfully rebuild their lives after prison. The project's new Coordinator, **Susan Carne**, spoke to **Jenny Seal** about her work recruiting volunteer mentors and sympathetic landlords.

In July, Susan Carne took up the role of Project Coordinator for the Community Chaplaincy Norfolk.

This service is based on the model established by the Community Chaplaincy Association, a growing national network of local projects which harness the resources available within faith communities, most particularly volunteers who give their time to support those who are seeking to make a fresh start after leaving prison.

Susan Carne's role within Community Chaplaincy Norfolk is to recruit and manage volunteer mentors who will work closely with ex-offenders who have expressed a desire to change their lives and want to break the cycles of behaviour that sees them returning to prison.

Susan is an Assemblies of God accredited minister and helped to lead a community church in an ex-pit village in South Yorkshire before moving to Norfolk, where she worked for a year as a Volunteer Chaplain in HMP Wayland. She has a keen passion for working with those on the margins.

She said: "I love being out in the community. I've always worked with marginalised, vulnerable people and I think they are the people that Jesus would be mixing with and wanting us to work with."

As a Volunteer Chaplain Susan has had many conversations in prison with men who desperately want to rebuild their lives when they are released. But as she explains: "The thing is, it is easy to talk about moving on on the inside but the reality is very hard. Once you've got a criminal record it is very hard to get a job. It is very hard to get a flat. Nobody trusts you. You are tarred with that ex-offender brush."

"However much you have paid your debt to society you are judged and condemned continuously really. But I hope that by providing a mentor that will go to appointments, speak on their behalf, stand with them in difficult situations, we will be able to make that difference."

Susan believes that the involvement of Christians will be key to the project's success. She said: "We know as Christians

Project co-ordinator
Susan Carne.



that we have the resilience to keep going with people without giving up on them. Yes, they are going to fail sometimes, just like we do, but they just need to be picked up and restarted again."

The service will deliberately start small with training for the first group of 6-8 volunteer mentors taking place in September and October. The project is looking to recruit volunteer mentors based across Norfolk who have the resilience to stick with the people in spite of setbacks, are professional, IT literate, and willing to be accountable to management.

It is hoped that there will be two training sessions a year so that it can slowly increase with integrity, being able to tell genuine success stories on the way with monitoring to show that their contribution has made the difference.

Chaplains based in HMP Norwich and HMP Wayland and elsewhere will send referrals of men who show a serious desire to turn their life around. Susan will then meet the man in prison to do her own assessment and ideally introduce them to their mentor before they then meet them at the gate on release.

Susan said: "I would hope that every person who requires this help or asks for this help would be teamed up with a mentor who would see them through to the success of whatever their goals and dreams and aspirations are. And for all of them and

us that is ultimately not returning to prison. That is the goal."

Community Chaplaincy Norfolk comes under the umbrella of Norwich-based charity House of Genesis which offers homely, supported accommodation to homeless men including ex-offenders.

Susan has quickly identified that a lack of accommodation is the biggest problem that sends many people back to prison. She said: "I'm talking to a lot of hostels and housing providers. The need is on the increase and Government funding is on the decrease. So cutbacks are meaning that provision can't be expanded and a lot of places are full all the time. It is a big problem."

Susan would love to work with Christian landlords or any landlords who are sympathetic to the work in order to access more accommodation.

If you would like to volunteer as a mentor or if you have accommodation you would be willing to rent to ex-offenders who are engaged with Community Chaplaincy Norfolk you can contact Susan at comm_chap_norfolk@hotmail.com or on 07758 208470.

You can also support the work by praying for Susan as she begins this new role, for divine appointments, finding favour with the authorities, volunteers, funding and "for daily opportunities to share the Good News with those that I meet."



BOOK REVIEW

Heaven's culture is possible here on earth says author

Understanding and creating culture is important writes David Elverson (pictured above), a Norwich-based management consultant and leader of the city's Kingdom Life Church.

His acclaimed book, *Creating a Culture of Overflow*, is a practical tool to help church, business and family leaders, as well as individual Christians, get to grips with culture.

It breaks down the sacred-secular divide, drawing deeply into the Bible and structured around the latest research in engagement, motivation and behavioural economics. Above all, it is written in an encouraging and informative way, to help readers live life to the full as God intended in Jesus Christ.

The first chapter, written by Paul Manwaring, a senior leader from Bethel Church in Redding, California and gifted in administration and government, quotes, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." He goes on to describe cultures as moulding thinking, behaviour and almost all aspects of life. It is the lens through which everything is viewed, and as such, will affect everything in an organisation. With such a sense of ownership and by which a group of people solve problems, Christian culture has similar hallmarks.

David majors on engagement when there are deep emotional and spiritual connections - those which lead people towards fullness of life (cf John 10.10). Then these people, active within a group or organisation, can live life in its fullness, achieving greater things. And with Jesus at the centre of this, it is revival.

Following chapters include practical advice and examples as to what individuals can do to develop areas of their own lives, such as vision, identity, authority, empowerment and strengths to live a full life. David writes candidly about his own life, including a miracle of healing from a potential major paralysis and personal revival.

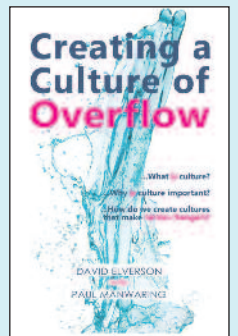
"All too often we think too small and our visions are too small. Jesus taught us that many of the parables that the Kingdom of Heaven is always increasing and that we are to steward that increase," said David. "What can we get involved with, how can we bless other churches, how can we be a unified body of Christ that develops this 'big' thinking into our congregations?"

"What next?" asks David, "Living life in all its fullness and overflowing into our communities should be our natural state? We are called to be like Jesus and release this life in all walks of life; in church, in our workplaces, our families and our communities. Jesus made no separation between these areas of life and neither should we."

This book will be a valuable resource especially for all clergy, business owners, those with family responsibilities and individuals who really want to partner with God and impact society.

Creating a Culture of Overflow is available on Amazon or from daveelverson@hotmail.com (£10).

By Kevin Gotts



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Connecting world with the church in Israel

■ Christians across the world are being connected with the living church in Israel thanks to the efforts of a Norfolk-based charity.

■ The message lit up on the phone: "Tonight I prayed with three refugees from Baghdad to accept Jesus!" We all like to receive good news, and when 'Your People My People' directors Amanda Harris and Karen Gower received the text, they were understandably excited, not in the least because it had been sent to them by a Jewish, Israeli pastor ministering in Finland!

This kind of good news does not usually make headlines in our media, but is at the heart of the vision of Your People My People, a charity based in Hockwold, West Norfolk.

Karen, originally from Norwich, and now back here via NZ, and the US, and her colleague and friend Amanda, have first-hand experience of both Jewish and Arab Israeli ministries working together and alongside each other, to win their nation with the Gospel, after serving in Israel for over ten years.

Realising that many Christians and



Pictured are Karen Gower (left) and Amanda Harris of West Norfolk-based charity Your People My People.

churches never hear the good news of what God is doing in Israel, inspired the ladies to start connecting Israeli believers with the Body of Christ around the UK and beyond.

"We realised that the local Arab and Jewish believers in Israel were praying together and doing

outreaches together. Looking past the political issues, they look at what they agree on, loving and following Jesus, and together, moving forward from there," shared the directors, both now living in Hockwold near Thetford.

"We see that many Christians only

hear the political news from the Middle East, but God is doing so much more. People are coming to faith in Jesus regularly! Our heart is to encourage Christians to start praying for the church in Israel, that they will be effective in winning others with the love of God and see

the Body grow in unity and maturity."

Your People My People works with and supports several organisations in Israel, Dugit Evangelistic Outreach Centre in Tel Aviv; Helping Hand Coalition who supports and aids the aging community of Holocaust Survivors throughout Israel; those helping terror victims in Jerusalem; HOPE, a house of prayer in Nazareth; and actively support Arab and Jewish individuals in full time ministry.

"Forging deep relationships over the years with local believers has given us a unique window to identify some of their needs, and the heart of the local body. Through the ministry of Your People My People, we now want to share these precious stories with you," said Karen.

"We believe that Jesus is the only hope for Israel and the Middle East, and that if we, as Christians, are willing to engage with what God is doing in this part of the world, then we will begin to see the kind of change that will make a difference!"

If you would like to receive YPMP's free magazine, or have YPMP run a stand at your event, come and speak to your group /church, or if you would just like to learn more of what God is doing in Israel, please contact them at: info@yourpeoplesmypeople.org or visit www.yourpeoplesmypeople.org

Great musical opportunity at Chapel Field Road Methodist Church

Are you a dynamic person with a strong Christian faith who could lead and develop our music?

- We have a strong musical tradition and a well-established adult choir.
- We need someone to play traditional and contemporary hymns and songs at our morning services.
- We have a pipe organ and a grand piano.
- We want to build up music with children and young people.

You would need to accompany the choir or accompany/direct at rehearsals on Friday evenings. You can even conduct our Christmas orchestra!

We have relief organists and the choir does not sing in August.

Remuneration and leave by agreement.

Contact Rev Catherine Hutton
01603 452086

catherine.hutton@methodist.org.uk
www.chapelfieldroadmethodist.org.uk

Declaration of support

More than 200 people attended the launch of **East Anglia Friends of Israel** at a Norwich church where many signed the **Shalom Declaration**. Mike Wiltshire reports.

The Shalom Declaration is a unique initiative building bridges between Jews and Christians. According to former Israeli President Shimon Peres, Jewish-Christian relations "are closer today than at any time in history".

More than 200 people attended the launch of East Anglia Friends of Israel (EAFI) in Norwich at an impressive gathering which brought together members of the local Jewish community and Christians from across the region to demonstrate their support for Israel.

At the event, which took place at Soul Church in Norwich, many signed the Shalom Declaration which calls upon political leaders to combat anti-Semitism and extremism across the world and promote positive ties with Israel. The new group announced an informal twinning arrangement with Yezreel Valley College in the Galilee. There are plans for visits to the College and to host events for college speakers in the UK.

Board of Deputies of British Jews consultant, Steven Jaffe, said: "East Anglia Friends of Israel is the latest grassroots friends of Israel group to be launched in the UK, joining East Midlands Friends of Israel which was launched the previous week. These wonderful and energetic



The East Anglia Friends of Israel launch at Soul Church in Norwich.

new groups demonstrate there is a national and growing movement in support of Israel in the UK. The event in Norwich was an outstanding and very moving show of support for Israel and the local Jewish community."

Group member Rosemary English spoke for many when she said: "It was such an eventful evening . . . we left behind our history and came together with the Jewish community to show our support for Israel - so important at this time of increasing anti-Semitism."

Summing up the event, Paul McHenry, vice-chair of the EAFI, said: "After such an historic, emotional and unifying night, it's time to begin the hard work putting words into action. Stand-

ing against anti-Semitism and injustice, we shall work together with our Jewish brothers and sisters both here in East Anglia, the UK and in the State of Israel itself. Our present and our future is now a united one."

Those taking part included Daniel Rosenthal and Marion Prinsley from the Norwich Synagogue; musicians Brenda Taylor and Juliet Dawn and Christian artist, Sarah McCrum. The MC for the evening was the Rev Nigel Fox, following a welcome by Pastor Trevor Pimlott.

Thousands of Christians across Europe have signed the Shalom Declaration since the initiative was launched in Leeds in March last year, including over 180 UK churches and ministries.

St Walstan's 1000th celebrations continue

■ Celebrations to mark the 1000th anniversary of the death of Norfolk-born Saint Walstan, are continuing in various locations associated with the patron saint of agriculture and farmworkers.

In May, two bishops led a medieval pilgrimage in Bawburgh, the birthplace of Saint Walstan who was known for his generosity and holy life.

The RC Bishop of East Anglia, the Rt Rev Alan Hopes, said Walstan was born into a wealthy family but renounced all his riches to work as a farm labourer.

"Walstan was a man in love with Jesus Christ. His example of holiness was lived not in any dramatic or extraordinary way but in the simple realities of life – that is what holiness is all about. He lived a simple life close to the land and realised that this was the way he must serve God."

The Bishop of Norwich,



Bishop Alan Hopes and Bishop Graham James lead the procession to St Walstan's Well.

the Rt Rev Graham James, said: "In the New Testament, the image of pilgrimage is used to describe the Christian life itself. Like Christians in Bawburgh 1,000 years ago, we are still here on the

pilgrim journey, inspired by a holy life lived in this locality. We come on life's journey and reflect on the greater pilgrimage to what we hope and pray will be our home in heaven."

In Bowthorpe, on the site

where a church was also first planted 1,000 years ago, there is a three-day multi-arts performance on September 9, 10 and 11, taking place in the memorial garden and historic ruins of St Michael and All

Angels Church, and in the adjacent modern Bowthorpe Church Centre. The church site also features a prayer cell and a stone memorial to Walstan.

The arts performance by the Slow Theatre Company features composers, singers, musicians and writers who will highlight the values of Walstan who gave up great riches to care for the land and the local community.

Bowthorpe Church is also looking forward to a double celebration on Saturday, October 30 at 3pm for the 30th anniversary of its present building - when it will also celebrate the recent completion of the new £70,000 church roof which features three prominent crosses in the new tile design.

Bowthorpe minister, Rev Mark Elvin says: "It will be a joyful celebration of all that Christ has done in Bowthorpe over the past decades."

Youth award for YMCA Norfolk

■ YMCA Norfolk has become the first youth organisation to achieve the nationally-recognised Ambition Quality - Bronze standard for the services it provides to young people throughout the county.

Youth and Community Manager Amanda Bayfield, who is responsible for the work, said: "The award is all about us raising the standards of our youth work in clubs and schools so that the quality is improved, providing a better environment for young people."

"We wanted to be first to achieve the award so that we can lead by example and be able to overcome any challenges we may face in order to support other Norfolk groups. It shows people and other organisations that we are great at what we do and will help us raise the benchmark."

The award provides a structured framework to make organisational changes which benefit staff, volunteers and young people and covers the extensive work which YMCA Norfolk does with young people, dozens of schools and youth groups across Norfolk.

There are three levels of awards; Bronze, Silver and Gold and they last for three years. "We will definitely be aiming for gold," said Amanda.

"By achieving Ambition Quality, YMCA Norfolk has made an ongoing commitment to quality improvement," said Rachel Smith, Head of Quality and Training at Ambition. "It has demonstrated its approach to quality through an evidence-based portfolio and ultimately ensure the best possible service for young people."

Work covered by the award includes a mental health awareness service provided to dozens of schools across Norfolk, three youth clubs in East Norfolk, the Big Lottery funded Life Ready project in Great Yarmouth and Life Ready in Norwich funded by Children in Need and a Great Yarmouth advisory service for independent youth clubs.

Ministries for men

Statistically, two thirds of men may find being in church uncomfortable, so how are three organisations within Norfolk helping make church a great place to be involved with? Kevin Gotts found out more.

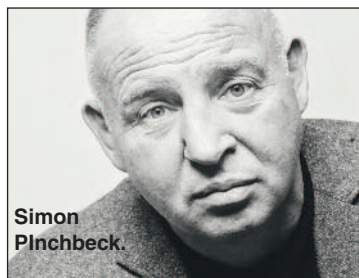
CVM

■ Christian Vision for Men – CVM, a non-denominational charitable organisation, evangelical in its outlook – which in simple terms aims to 'Win Men for Jesus'. They promote small men's groups to partner with them - either from a church or groups of churches.

"We don't want a church dominated by men or male characteristics nor do we want to make church a "men's club"; just a place where men can be gripped and excited by Jesus." said Simon Pinchbeck, CVM Regional Director for The East, "So we offer resources and support to motivate and equip Christian men to 'Have a Go for Jesus' in their daily lives and give them the strength and the courage, to introduce non-Christian men into their groups, and ultimately to Jesus and the church."

CVM has two Area Coordinators in Norfolk - Stephen Gladwell in Norwich organising a CVM

'Unleashed' day in November - where men will come together to do activities in a woodland setting; and Simon Fenn in North Norfolk, who has instigated a number of 'Men's Breakfasts' from Cromer Church, which he has opened up to Christian men of any denomination. His heart is for 'Discipleship' and to that end he has championed



Simon Pinchbeck.

a CVM resource called 'The Code' - which is twelve steps to follow Jesus. Plus CVM Swaffham, where Mike Bennet heads up a partnered group in the town and regularly hold breakfast meetings in the parish church in Necton.

■ Contact: simon.pinchbeck@cvm.org.uk or www.cvm.org.uk

Caleb

■ Caleb, formed a year ago by five men from different churches across Norwich who got together and all shared the same feeling that many Christian men were looking for a deeper relationship with God.

Stephen Gladwell said, "We identified that the men in our

churches were seeking more. We were taken by the claim made by Caleb, a great man of faith, in Joshua 14:8 "for my part, I wholeheartedly followed the Lord". We were challenged by this and felt it was the thing the men in our churches were seeking; what does it mean to wholly follow the Lord?"

Caleb meets on the third Saturday each month at Witard Road Baptist Church, Norwich and is informal. Any man from any denomination is welcome. They start with a drink and doughnuts, and then have a short time of worship, followed by some teaching around a topic. After a short break they continue with discussion around what has been heard and how it can be applied to everyday lives. Doors are open from 8.30am for coffee and finish at 11am.

Stephen continues, "Together with the church leaders, our desire is to see the men in Norwich fulfil their potential in Christ and be transformed into the man God wants them to be."

■ Contact: www.calebwftl.org.uk

FGB

■ The Full Gospel Businessmen UK & Ireland (or FGB for short) is part of the largest network of Christian businessmen in the world: from every part of the world. Norwich FGB Chapter is headed up by Dr Barrie Lawrence.

Their meetings are open to men and women and the definition of

businessman is all inclusive and meant to include all people in or out of work.

The FGB mission is:

■ Fellowship with members across the world

■ Fulfilling our Destiny within the call of God on our lives

■ To reach men and women for Christ and empower them for Life through the Holy Spirit

■ Operating as 'an arm of the Christian Church': serving and supported by local Churches, to which we remain committed

■ Seeing the Kingdom of God extended for His Glory

"What's different about FGB? There's food in a variety of settings, where one can meet men for fellowship (fellowship evenings) and engage in evangelism in different settings - dinners in hotels and restaurants, breakfasts, lunches, pubs.... The 'full gospel' aspect, i.e. expecting miracles today is considered by some as a rarity these days," explained Barrie. "Recently at a dinner, a lady exclaimed 'my knees have been healed,' and a few minutes later, gave her life to Jesus."

Barrie concluded, "This year in Norwich, we also held a music (and food) evening in a pub, as well as a curry evening at an Indian restaurant. There is even talk of an Elvis event next year. We are relevant to today's world, to a new wave of people looking for values in today's world."

■ Contact: www.norwichfgb.co.uk or barrielawrence@btinternet.com

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Book of answered prayer

■ Good storytellers attract and engage their audiences quickly. Barrie Lawrence, the well-known Norfolk dentist, blogger, speaker and Christian author has recently launched his fourth book with the title *The Curious Case of the Constipated Cat* and other true stories of answered prayer.

In this new book, Barrie, known for his straightforward, compelling and non-jargon style – refreshing for many Christians – has compiled interesting and often entertaining stories of a constipated cat, a boy with a deformed arm, an angel in Venice, a romance restored, an irritable bowel and many more relating to answered prayer.

He playfully ends some accounts with a view that some people would consider the outcome as “it’s a coincidence, or maybe psychosomatic.”

Enthusiasm underpins Barrie’s approach to life.

Describing himself as “a normal ordinary person, living a normal

BOOK REVIEW

ordinary life” who has experienced answered prayers and wanted to share them in this new book.

The practice of prayer has been honed over 50 years, “I was born again into a new family – God’s family. Now one of his children, I could pray to my Heavenly Father,” Barrie reflected. “But I have become bolder in my prayer life, happy to pray on the spot when a need arises, increasingly praying over the telephone with people, often daily.”

Part Two, moves into how Barrie and his wife Wendy have been able to pray and evidence healings, miracles and needs met. Their Christian “mantra” is relationship, based on knowing the God of the Bible as a Father, following Jesus’ teachings; and listening to and working with the Holy Spirit of God. Barrie tells of spending time with God, rather like

spending time with a spouse, so that the relationship grows and flourishes.

Barrie also includes attitudes and behaviours that may hamper prayer and a relationship with God, and the problem that sometimes prayers seem to be “unanswered”.

He finishes with a call to step out in prayer, have faith, develop a relationship with the Lord and to pray in the name of Jesus. “May you know richly the blessing of the living God – who answers the prayers of his children when they cry out to him.” This as the title alludes to, worked for Bathsheba the constipated cat, and a wide spectrum of people, with dramatic recoveries following prayer.

Barrie and Wendy also run a home-based church called Liberty in Frettenham, north of Norwich.

The book is available from Jarrolds and Amazon or visit: www.barrielawrence.com
By Kevin Gotts



Bishop Alan Hopes celebrates the 40th Anniversary Mass at the Catholic Cathedral in Norwich.

Pope support at 40th anniversary

Up to 1,500 people, many of whom came from the 50 parishes of the Catholic Diocese of East Anglia, attended the Mass when the preacher was Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster and the chief celebrant was the Bishop of East Anglia, the Rt Rev Alan Hopes.

Cardinal Nichols said: “The Cathedral houses the images of three East Anglian saints of the first millennium: St Felix, St Etheldreda and St Edmund: a bishop, an abbess and a king. They remind us that faith in these parts is as old as the hills. And they offer us a challenge to be diligent in our mission to live out the faith, playing our part in the continuing story of Christianity in East Anglia now and into the future.”

The Solemn Diocesan Mass was presided over by Bishop Alan, who said: “In the 2,000 year history of our Church, our 40 years may seem rather small and insignificant but, of course, these few years mark not only a beginning but also a fruition of a long period of evangelisation and Christian witness in this part of England.

“Over the past 40 years, the Diocese has made its mark in the life of the whole Christian community, in its involvement with and outreach to the neediest and most vulnerable in our society. The Catholic community has played its full part in working together and co-operating with other Christians, especially in seeking the common good of all.”

Apostolic Nuncio to the UK, Archbishop Antonio Mennini, brought Pope Francis’ message

Pope Francis offered his prayers and support for the Diocese of East Anglia, which celebrated its 40th anniversary with a Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich on June 3. Keith Morris reports.

of support and prayers with him to the Mass. The Nuncio also presented a Year of Mercy medal from Pope Francis, which will be displayed at the Cathedral.

The Pope’s message reads: “His Holiness prays that you

may all be renewed in your love of Christ and, in turn, revitalize your parishes, so that all may be ‘a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey and a centre of constant missionary outreach’ (Evangelii Gaudium 28). In this way, you will manifest God’s love and mercy to the broader community and share the richness of our faith in Christ Jesus.”

The Diocese came into existence 40 years ago, when Pope Paul VI approved the creation of the Diocese of East Anglia, and, on June 2, 1976, Bishop Alan Clark was installed as its first bishop. At the same time the church of St John the Baptist in Norwich became a cathedral church, one of the largest in the country.



Apostolic Nuncio to the UK Archbishop Antonio Mennini (left), Bishop of East Anglia Rt Rev Alan Hopes and Cardinal Vincent Nichols Archbishop of Westminster.



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