

GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

Summer 2022: FREE

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Celebrate

Celebrating work of the Norfolk Christian community – pages 5-7



Mark Little with survivors of sex slavery at their training centre in Mumbai

Delia says you matter

Delia Smith has written a book about spirituality, the universe and why every human matters. See page 4.



Queen honours Mark's 20-year slavery battle

Mark Little is on a 20-year quest to battle slavery in India, Nepal, Thailand and Norfolk, which led to him being awarded an MBE by the Queen earlier this year. **Eldred Willey** reports.

It's an unusual person who watches a TV programme about injustice, and then does something about it. In 2001, Mark Little, a founder member of the Norwich St Edmund Rotary Club, was bowled over by a Channel 4 documentary about modern slavery worldwide, particularly in India.

He wrote to 80 Rotary clubs in Delhi seeking more information about the rehabilitation centres for rescued slaves featured on the documentary. Two replied, and four months after the programme had been aired Mark was on a plane to Delhi to see for himself. The visit began for him a 20-year campaign against modern slavery.

Mumbai is the Indian city in which Mark

was born. His father was a doctor who ran a mental hospital. "The English lived fairly royally," he remembers, "and life was idyllic. We had a huge garden where I pretended to be Tarzan." Life was organised by the servants, so there was no opportunity for the child to notice any slavery in India. He was sent to a boarding school in the hills of Tamil Nadu which was equally fantastic.

In 1947, India won its independence and everything changed. The English were no longer welcome. The family caught a ship to Liverpool, where they stayed with his father's sister. Mark's mother had a strong faith and put him through the Catholic school system in Liverpool and then Birkenhead. When he emerged, he joined the audit department of the civil service.

His career in audit and accountancy eventually led him to Norfolk, where he became Assistant County Treasurer for Norfolk County Council. He helped to found a new branch of Rotary, which initially met at the Caister Country Club just south of the city.

■ Continued on page 4

BIG BLUE SKY

A Celebration of Norfolk
by Barrie Lawrence

After a 70-year romance with Norfolk, Barrie reflects upon the rural charm of characters, accent, the history and country life.

You'll laugh, you'll cry and when you've finished reading, you'll want more.



£9.95 in bookshops, Amazon or at www.barrielawrence.com



GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

■ Good News for Norwich & Norfolk is published by Network Norwich & Norfolk, part of the Christian Community Trust for Norwich and Norfolk Ltd. Registered charity no 1105340.

■ Website: www.networknorfolk.co.uk
 ■ Editorial: 07712 787762 or e-mail stories to keith.morris@networknorwich.co.uk or send copy to Pear Tree Farmhouse, Wymondham Road, Wrenningham, Norwich NR16 1AT.
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 ■ Editor and designer: Keith Morris
 ■ Writers: Sandie Shirley, Helen Baldry, Kevin Gotts, Eldred Willey, Tony Rothe
 ■ The deadline for content for the Winter edition is Friday November 11. Distribution is from Thursday December 1.

■ We endeavour to adhere to the IMPRESS standards code. If you have a complaint you should, in the first instance, contact the editor keith.morris@networknorwich.co.uk with details. If you are still not satisfied you should contact IMPRESS, details below.



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Norwich Passion Play turned into a short film

A short film, recorded during the recent Norwich Passion Play, has been released online to tell the Gospel story in a contemporary way through the drama played out on the city streets by Saltmine Theatre Company and local actors and musicians.



Scenes from the Norwich Passion Play. Pictures by Keith Morris.



The Norwich Passion Play was watched by over 1,400 people who were captivated by the dramatic scenes acted out in bright sunshine on Hay Hill and Millennium Plain and inside St Peter Mancroft church over the Easter weekend in mid-April.

Large crowds, which packed out Hay Hill, were mesmerized by the rabble-rousing of Emily Feltham as Mary Magdalene atop a plinth. Local drummers and chanting created a carnival atmosphere as the throng eagerly joined the Palm Sunday procession following Freddy Goymer, as Jesus, on a bike up to Millennium Plain.

The modern-day drama, recalling historic events 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem, continued to unfold in front of the Forum, with the Last Supper – featuring fish and chips from Norwich Market – and the poignant betrayal of Jesus by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The arrest of Jesus by riot shield-carrying militants and his trial, and sentence to death by crucifixion by Pontius Pilate, took place in front of jeering crowds, including the Norwich-based community cast led by Rachel Hobson.

Some were shocked and many others left in tears by the portrayal of Jesus carrying his cross and then being tied to it, along with two convicted criminals either side of him.

As a dead Jesus was carried away, the crowds were directed inside St Peter Mancroft to see the last scene. The group of stunned and dispirited disciples were transformed when Mary Magdalene said she had seen Jesus come back from the dead. Disciples Thomas, Peter and John were amazed when the resurrected Jesus appeared at the back of the church to loud cheers from a packed audience.

Jesus' triumph over death was acclaimed by all and then celebrated in style by a Nor-

folk Gospel choir and band, led by Heather Land, who sang Great is He and Oh Happy Day as the audience stood up to clap and sing along, before giving a standing ovation.

The one-off event was staged by Celebrate Norfolk with Saltmine Theatre Company and members of dozens of Norwich churches after being delayed last year by the Covid pandemic.

And now the team at Celebrate Norfolk have released a 13-minute film based on the play to help it to reach an even greater audience online.

Organiser Keith Morris said: "We were overwhelmed with the response from the many hundreds who joined us at Easter, packing out all of the locations.

"We didn't want that dramatic telling of the Gospel story just to be for those who could attend on the day – we also want people to be able to follow the entire story online.

"So we have worked with videographer Adam Jackson to produce a compelling and fast-moving film which captures all the key elements of the last few days of Jesus life, death and resurrection.

"You can see it online on YouTube and we also want to make high resolution versions of it available for free to any church, life group or organisation who wants it to play to whatever audience they choose."

See the film at youtu.be/9MFZyrsc388 or at celebratenorfolk.co.uk

If you would like to be sent a high-resolution version of the film suitable for being shown in small-group or church settings, email keith.morris@networknorwich.co.uk



Call or register online for your visit

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Joy's African dream

Housebound for 13 years with chronic fatigue syndrome, Norwich teenager **Joy McCann** dreamt of working in East Africa. Today, she is a young missionary in Kenya and has just taken on a new role there for the Vineyard church network. **Eldred Willey** reports.

In 2015, said Joy, "I had a remarkable recovery after suffering for 13 years with chronic fatigue syndrome, also known as ME. While this is labelled as an invisible illness, it had effects which were very evident in my life."

Joy went from being a strong-minded adolescent just starting high school in 2002, to being bed-ridden and having to stay in the dark due to light sensitivity. The illness had a massive effect on her teenage and early adult years.

"I was a Christian and knew Jesus in my heart," she said. "But never did I know him more than during those years of illness. They shaped who I am today, and I honestly believe God used them for my good. He didn't cause the illness, but He most certainly used it."

Joy's dream to live and work in East Africa formed as she lay in her room, not even able to watch TV. In the darkness and silence, she saw what she believed to be visions of herself in Africa.

"I always believed it was East Africa, for some reason," she remembers. "I saw myself dancing in traditional clothes with children, speaking in churches, and baptising people. I wondered how on earth this could ever happen, but that closeness I had with Jesus caused me to somehow believe that I would be able to use my experiences of hopelessness, fear and illness to encourage a community I was yet to meet."

The family tried several treatments, including physiotherapy, vitamin tablets and even fish oil. While they would sometimes see a little improvement, Joy was still in pain and exhausted.

However, Joy also received prayer the whole way through the illness, and this did have a big impact on her life and her visions. In the final year of illness, the prayer happened at Gateway Vineyard Church in Norwich.

"I had heard of the Vineyard movement but had never been part of it," she explains. "When my parents joined the church in 2014, my mum told me they were eager to meet me and pray for my healing. I still remember the first time I felt my arm become well as they prayed. Sometimes it felt like a battle, but one day in worship I felt the entire illness leave my body. It was a very surreal experience, but undeniable. I was able to do everything. No tiredness."

Joy found herself as a healthy 25-year-old, with no experience of being an adult in the



Joy McCann at Trinity Vineyard church in Nakuru, Kenya.

outside world, and only a primary school education. However, what she had gained in that time of illness remained: a closeness with the person of Jesus, and a vision to live and work in East Africa.

A friend of hers had a charity in Mwanza, Tanzania, called Tanzania Bridge of Hope, and she offered to take Joy there. "When I arrived in Tanzania I wept as I saw the very things I had seen in those visions in my dark room," she said. In 2016 she moved to Tanzania, started working in Bridge of Hope Day Care and also with street children, becoming fluent in Kiswahili.

Two years later, however, several doors unexpectedly closed, and Joy came back to England. She did an internship at Gateway Vineyard Church in Norwich, attended the Vineyard National Leaders Conference and went to a mission seminar. There she learned of Trinity Vineyard Church in Nakuru, Kenya. She was excited at the prospect of seeing what another part of East Africa might look like and arrived in Nakuru in 2019.

"I saw the very strong giftings and drive which Kenyan people have," she said, "and their motivation to see change in their communities and individual lives." She began to get very involved in Trinity Vineyard Church Nakuru, and their leadership team.

Joy is now working as a self-funded missionary in Kenya under the Association of Vineyard Churches. Before she came, she had never led worship or written a sermon, but

Celebrate King's Lynn is set to stage free family day of fun

■ Celebrate King's Lynn is back on Saturday July 23 with a day packed with completely free family fun at The Walks near the town centre, courtesy of the town's Christian community.

Around 15 churches and Christian organisation will be taking part, providing a wide range of entertainment from 12 noon to 5pm.

Included will be drumming workshops, a mini Olympics, children's games, music, free health checks, free refreshments, gladiator and sumo suits and a bouncy castle.

Groups and churches who will be attending include: St Johns, The Kings Glory, Bridge For Heroes, Norfolk Healing Rooms, Radical Church with its Big Blue Bus, Church of the Nazarene, Christian Motorbike Association, the Kings Centre, clown Sally Beadle – Crazy Bananas, Seventh Day Adventists, Evangelical Church and St Faiths Church.

For more information email oliviakingslynn@gmail.com or visit: www.facebook.com/CelebrateKingsLynn



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welcome

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parking

Queen honours slavery battle

■ Continued from front page

Rotary gave Mark the context in which to put into action a generous nature and a wide skill set. He cooked Indian curries and raised money for a project to inoculate children against polio. He hired the Norwich Playhouse and brought over a dancer from India to do a fundraising show to raise money to rebuild a village in South India which had been destroyed by the great tsunami of 2004. He took a course in bricklaying at Norwich City College and went out to India several times to build facilities such as toilet blocks, reservoirs, orphanages and many other amenities in Hindu and Muslim villages.

It was after watching the Channel 4 documentary, however, that he found his real cause. The quest to battle slavery led him beyond India, to Nepal and Thailand. He took his grandson, who was training to be a solicitor, and a small Rotarian group, to visit various trafficking shelters in the Kathmandu region and began to think more deeply about the reasons for the persistence of slavery.

"Corruption makes a culture more vulnerable to slavery," he said. "When police and state officials are not paid much, they end up supplementing their income from the slave owners. When a raid is about to take place, the police tip off the slave owners, and the children are spirited away."

The politics of south Asia also make it difficult to respond. India is making it difficult for foreign organisations sending money to charities based in India, and Nepal appears to tax money received into the country from bank transfers, which has made Mark revert to cash for his charitable gifts to that country. Decades of experience as an auditor have stood him in good stead as he reviews the accounts of the organisations which receive cash gifts from external donors.

Mark is equally concerned about the growth of modern slavery in the UK. "When the men cleaning the cars have no safety equipment, when a holiday let is visited by a series of men, we need to become suspicious," he said. "Slavery can only be eliminated if more and people know that it exists."

True to his convictions, Mark organised a session at the Maid's Head Hotel for hoteliers and people working in hospitality to help them spot victims of modern slavery. It does not stop at the edge of the city, however. "Behind the hedges of lovely rural Norfolk, vegetable and fruit pickers are working as slaves," said Mark. "The police even discovered a cannabis factory run by slave owners."

So what can people do? "Educate yourself and help others become aware," suggests Mark. "Give to organisations like Hope for Justice and the International Justice Mission which are fighting against slavery. Get companies to check their supply chains. Campaign for anti-slavery laws to be strengthened, and for procurement regulations to be extended from businesses to include local and central government."

And, one could finally add, catch some of that go-getter, proactive approach which led to the Queen awarding Mark a well-earned MBE in this year's honours list for his campaign against modern slavery.

Delia says you matter

TV cook and Norwich City joint majority share-holder **Delia Smith** has written a book about spirituality, the universe and why every human matters. Review by **Keith Morris**.

Better known for her TV recipes and her role at Norwich City, Delia is also a Catholic convert. After writing cookery books and TV series for 50 years, Delia says she desperately wanted to write something about spirituality that wasn't about religion.

And being at home in Suffolk during the Covid lockdowns gave her the ideal opportunity to finish a project that she had been working on for about five years.

Talking to an audience of Daily Telegraph readers, Delia said: "I wanted to write about human life and the amazing thing that it is. It is something we take for granted but it is actually phenomenal and I was inspired by a man called Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a French Jesuit priest and scientist.

"We are in this vast universe which goes on for infinity and we live on this tiny planet in one corner. And as far as we know we are the only life in all that and we have this beautiful planet and are perhaps now in a bit of a dark place in this world in which we have everything. I wrote the book to encourage people to think more deeply about themselves."

Delia was keen to stress that it is not a religious book: "I have great respect for religion, and I am very attached to my own, but there are all different religions and I just wanted people to know that they have a spiritual life that is natural and we need to develop it.

"Everybody has something to offer, everybody is unique and different. There is not anybody on this planet who has the same face or voice. It is phenomenal and we have to sit down and think about that. Everybody has something special that they can offer life and the community. I go on in the book about the fact that you need times of stillness and silence to think and think more deeply."

Being still and silent you are developing your own spiritual capacity, explains Delia.

"It's not about meditation but about being still and silent for at least 30 minutes every day – now I do an hour when I get up in the morning. I just let my mind do what it wants to – I might be day-dreaming, or thinking I need to go to Waitrose, or anything at all. But every now and again you suddenly find you have gone a little deeper. You are letting it happen to you. Let it be done unto you.

"There are those moments in life maybe music or in nature when you are awakened in a deeper place," says Delia. "A lot of people are afraid of depth, they are afraid that they don't want to know about themselves because they might not like what they know. But when you really begin to know yourself, you begin to understand yourself – you learn how to be tender with yourself – there is no guilt or



Delia Smith. Image by Robert Wilson/News Licensing

condemnation.

"We all have something we can give each other. It is not about being selfish. If you are happy with yourself in your own skin and you respect yourself, then you start to respect everybody else, so there is a connection then to other people.

"It does not mean I don't have anxiety of all the struggles other people have, but there is this lovely bit of calm and peace which does pervade the rest," she says.

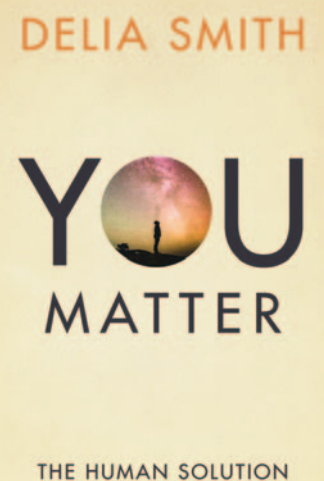
"There is no such thing as an easy ride, life is full of trial, error, difficulties and pain but there is also a tremendous amount of joy. Julian of Norwich wrote 'pain is passing but joy is lasting'.

"At the end of the book I speak about love," said Delia. "We know we love our friends, partners but there is a love we don't know about which is a love deep inside us that connects us. Developing

your spiritual life makes you aware of that connection and it makes you much more comfortable and understanding of other people."

You Matter: The Human Solution by Delia Smith is published by Mensch at £14.99.

■ Quotes from Delia Smith talking to a Daily Telegraph subscriber audience.



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find out more about Celebrate at celebratenorfolk.co.uk



Chance to volunteer at Norwich church cafe

St Stephen's Café in Norwich city centre is springing back to life for the summer and is in need of more enthusiastic volunteers to help serve its many and varied customers.

Vicar Rev Canon Madeline Light said: “The Cafe at St Stephen's is now almost back to the levels of customers that we had in 2019 – before we were hit like everyone else by the Covid lockdowns.

“Like everyone we have had a strange couple of years. We were fortunate to have some rainy day money which we needed to use to keep our overheads covered. We are not a business so didn't qualify for business help but we were very grateful for the furlough money to help pay staff. We kept and paid all our staff.

“The financial pressures were the downside of the pandemic for us alongside the



concern for many people who found lockdown hard. However we have learned many things during this time. In 2019, our popularity with customers was making being a volunteer in the Cafe sometimes very hard work. As we have come out of lockdown we have simplified the menu and considered how to make our kitchen operation as

streamlined as possible,” said Madeline.

“It is a delight to see the church full again with such a variety of people who choose to come because they enjoy the peace, reasonable prices, home cooked food or play areas for young children.”

But many of the café's previous volunteers have had to stop or have retired and now it needs more help.

“There are lots of jobs to be done, such as operating the dishwasher, collecting plates, managing the till or making drinks,” said Madeline. “The team is a happy friendly bunch of people from many different walks of life and the managers

care well for the volunteers. We pray before each session and look after each other so together we express the love of Jesus to the customers.”

If you are interested in helping out, please contact Beckie Ward, Cafe manager at beckie.ward@ststephensnorwich.org or ring 01603 617697 ststephensnorwich.org

Norwich FGB would love to see you visit

The “Happiest People on Earth” is one description of a worldwide fellowship of believers started around 70 years ago, and with local groups in around 150 nations, they have been enjoying times together in Norwich for over 40 years. But you may ask, “What do you do?” **Norwich FGB** president **Barrie Lawrence** provides the answer.

■ Let's start with who we are – formerly known as the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International, we have been called the FGB for around 20 years. We are Christians who are keen to share our faith, in a variety of

ways. Traditionally, we meet at breakfasts and dinners where a main speaker shares their life story. We never preach! We just want to hear how they became a Christian, and of the difference it has made. As we believe very much that the Lord Jesus has not changed, and is still doing the things He did in Gospel times, we hear about people being healed, having miraculous provision, etc. And we pray for people at our meetings expecting, and seeing, miracles.

Our members are from every line of business – plumbers, clerks, farm workers, builders, teachers, journalists, doctors, drivers... even the odd dentist! Ladies can join our ‘Women of FGB’ and work alongside us and are welcome at our meetings. Those from all denominations and none are included. We leave our denominational badge at home, and come together as family. We are not a church, but a group of like-minded believers.

We meet in a variety of ways, some of them

to share our personal story, and some to encourage one another, and frankly, to have a lot of fun. Not everyone wants to go out on the streets giving out our Voice magazine, but some do. Not everyone wants to attend a Gospel Song evening in a pub, with pub grub, but some do.

We have had an Indian Evening in an Indian restaurant with a converted Sikh speaking, an Elvis evening when we took over a nightclub, and a ‘Taste of Israel’ evening, with Israeli food and music and a Messianic Jewish speaker. In fact, we want different ideas, (please give us suggestions), so that everyone feels comfortable in doing what they feel gifted and able to do.

We love to welcome visitors, and especially if they then decide to join and help us with the work. Interested? Phone me, Barrie Lawrence, on 07786 381344 or email at fgbnorwich@gmail.com

Find out more at www.norwichfgb.co.uk

Community chaplaincy offers support for ex-offenders

Community Chaplaincy Norfolk (CCN) is a Christian charity which provides **Volunteer Mentors** for **ex-offenders of all faiths and none**, supporting them to rebuild their lives after prison, as its team explains.

How does it work?

■ Based on a model established by national organisation The Community Chaplaincy Association, CCN employs a manager: to recruit, train and support volunteer mentors; to assess potential clients; to liaise with the prison authorities, probation, and other relevant agencies; and to allocate clients to mentors, all based at St Stephen's Church café in Norwich city centre.

“This has been one of the best things I've found to help with rehabilitation... I don't think I would have made it on my own if I'm honest.” CCN Client.

The Client Journey

■ Our work is not time limited. Once a person has been accepted as a CCN client, a mentor will meet them several times in prison, to build up a relationship and identify the kind of support they need to achieve their goals.

On the day of discharge, we try to meet each client at the gate and accompany them to accommodation, probation, or other appointments. This is followed by regular meetings with their mentor to discuss progress and work through any challenges.

“It's just helping that person to walk life's journey, really.” CCN Mentor.

Volunteer Mentors

■ Our mentors come from a diverse background of life experiences and beliefs. They range in age and there is a good gender mix. All mentors undertake an initial training which is followed by additional training and group support sessions. All mentors are also supported by regular one-to-one sessions with the CCN manager. If you might like to become a Mentor for CCN, please look at our website and get in touch – details below.

The Wider Community

■ Norfolk has a rich diversity of services available to help clients with applying for benefits, support agencies for addictions, and opportunities for voluntary positions, positive activities, training, education, or work. Mentors signpost clients to these agencies and explore options with them. We co-ordinate a quarterly forum for organisations working with people with convictions. If you are interested in the forum or to discuss partnership working, please get in touch.

A Christian ethos – open to all

■ CCN is not part of the prison system and, while it is a Christian charity, it is not attached to any one denomination. We welcome clients and mentors of all faiths and none.
 ■ Website: www.norfolkchaplaincy.org.uk
 ■ Email: info@norfolkchaplaincy.org.uk



Norfolk Healing Rooms has faith for our times

Norfolk Healing Rooms (HRs) provide free ministry for healing in body, mind and spirit. Norfolk HRs also run Norfolk School of Prophets (NSOP) and Prophetic Intercessors at NSOP.

■ The ministry of Norfolk HRs, directed by Revs Ray and Ruth Scorey, rests firmly on the promise of Isaiah 53:4-5, which states that we are not just saved, but healed; it's a finished work of the cross.

Ray says: "We are called to heal the sick in the power, name and authority of Jesus. Since we opened in 2007 we've seen wonderful physical healings with eyesight, fractures, pain, cancer and infertility, not to mention emotional and spiritual healings."

HRs were inspired by John G Lake in 1914 in Spokane, USA, which saw 100,000 documented healings over a five-year period. Cal Pierce re-dug the wells of healing there in 1999 and the International Association of Healing Rooms (IAHR) now has over 3,000 centres in over 80 countries. They have a vision to see at least one HR in every city across the world. The first HR in the UK opened in Halifax in 2003. Norfolk HR began in 2007. There are now over 70 HRs in the UK and expansion continues.

Ray and Ruth have been Regional Directors of HRs in the East of England for six years and became National Advisors to HRs Scotland in 2019. HR team members are spirit-filled Christians from a variety of denominations. They are thoroughly trained and regularly kept up-to-date with healing ministry. Norfolk HRs welcome to the team any Spirit-filled Christian with a heart for healing.

Ministry with Norfolk HRs is free (donations always welcome) via Zoom, telephone and WhatsApp with additional face-to-face sessions at various locations coming soon.

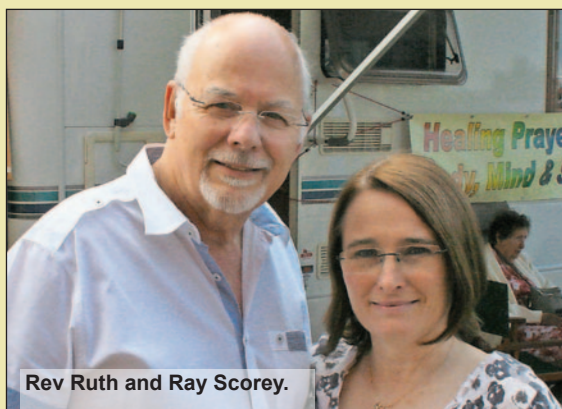
Web: healingrooms.org.uk/healing-rooms-near-you
Email: norfolk@healingrooms.org.uk
Tel: 07900 341 287

Norfolk HRs do introductory talks for Christian organisations interested in knowing more.

Norfolk HRs are steeped in intercession, all ministry being undergirded by prayer. They also run weekly Zoom intercession meetings for revival and daily mid-week groups for Ukraine. So many donations for Ukraine poured into the Norfolk HR bank account that more than £12,000 has already been sent to HRs Kyiv, to support special humanitarian operations over there.

Ray and Ruth run Norfolk School of Prophets and offer free taster sessions in the prophetic, encouraging and inspiring people to hear God more clearly in an interactive and enjoyable way.

They attend Celebrate King's Lynn each year to offer healing ministry and personal prophetic words in the HR campervan.



Rev Ruth and Ray Scorey.

A great place to meet, browse, relax and eat

Revelation in Norwich is a Christian resource centre, offering a bookshop, a meeting place and a welcoming refuge for refreshment open to visitors of any faith or none.

New manager Cathy Luland said: "We are the only Christian Bookshop and Resource Centre in the area. We have Christian books on a wide range of topics; from just looking into the Christian faith to deeper theology.

Bibles in all shapes and sizes, along with gifts, music, cards, many different resources for children & young people and a large second-hand book section.

"You can eat in or takeaway at our cafe - from a quick cup of tea, to a snack or a full home-cooked main meal - all at very reasonable prices."

Revelation is located in the St Michael-at-Plea Medieval Church on Redwell Street, a short distance from St Andrew's car park and a five-minute walk from the Market Place, at the top of London



Open
Tue - Sat
10am to 4pm
& Cafe to 3pm

Street.

The church ceased to be a place of worship in 1973, and opened as a Resource Centre and Café in October 2008.

Opening Hours: Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 4pm, Cafe closes at 3pm.

Location: Revelation, Norwich Chris-

tian Resources, St Michael at Plea Church, Redwell Street, Norwich, NR2 4SN

Tel: 01603 619731

E: enquiry@revelation-norwich.co.uk

W: www.norwichcrc.co.uk

Norwich gospel choir sings in the city

It's a really exciting time for Norwich Community Gospel Choir with new rehearsals starting and its first free 'Sing in the City' pop-up event taking place recently.

Norwich Community Gospel Choir (NCGC) director, Megan Rawling, said: "Our new Friday morning rehearsal has begun at Chapelfield Road Methodist Church and we have just had our first free 'Sing in the City' pop-up event outside the Forum.

"We're gearing up not only for more of these over the summer, but also for our end-of-year concert in collaboration with a visiting youth choir at the end of July.

"Over the next 12 months we are set to be involved in one of our most interesting projects yet - seeking to revisit our purpose in a series of linked events and concerts throughout the year that are designed to simply ask, 'what is the gospel?' Much more on this to follow.

"This is a fabulous time to join NCGC, with so much going on and in the



NCGC performing Sing in the City outside the Forum in Norwich.

pipeline," said Megan. "We don't audition and have no preconditions in terms of experience, faith background or musical ability. We'd love for anyone to come and join us as we build community, share faith and make music together.

"There are also tons of ways to support NCGC outside of singing too: we're on the hunt for photographers, people who can pray for us, and we'd love to hear

from churches who are interested in collaborating with us over the course of this next year - hosting concerts, services or community events, or who would simply be happy for us to drop into a church service to say hello."

For any further information on the work of NCGC, check out www.ncgc.org.uk, or drop us an email to hello@ncgc.org.uk

Group offers Norwich prayer

Norwich Healing Rooms is a place where anyone can go to for prayer, no matter what the need, whether physical, emotional or spiritual.

It opened in September 2013 and is currently operating from the Gospel Hall, Antingham Road, Norwich and St Stephen's in Norwich city centre.

The Norwich Healing Rooms is part of The International Association of

Healing Rooms, with over 2,000 centres worldwide.

Norwich Healing Rooms are available every Thursday from 7.30pm at The Gospel Hall, Antingham Road, Norwich and every second Saturday of the month at St Stephens Church, Norwich from 12 – 3pm. It is completely free of charge.

Charles and Vivien Strafford are Directors of Norwich Healing Rooms. They explain: "Our team is dedicated to seeing the same healings which took place in the Bible take place today, because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and

forever. We support people who are willing to share their needs and benefit from caring prayer in line with scripture, in a safe and confidential environment.

"The impact on the people that come to visit us is very powerful. We are the hands and feet of Jesus and our commission is to tell others about the Good News of the gospel, pray for the sick in all areas of a person's life and see them healed in body mind and spirit. We are totally scriptural in all we do, led by the Holy Spirit."

You can read more about Norwich Healing Rooms at: norwichhealingrooms.co.uk

Charity is a place for new beginnings

The House of Genesis is a Norwich charity, which offers supported accommodation to homeless men, many of whom are ex-offenders.

Val Dodsworth founded the charity in December 2000 in her home. With very little in the way of initial resources other than faith and determination she, helped by an ex-offender, combined their skills and life experiences to begin the work that has grown into The House of Genesis – a place to make a new start.

Since that time the charity has grown steadily and now has five properties on the east side of Norwich, with five staff offering supported accommodation for up to 17 men.

After so many years of service, Val has recently retired from her position as trustee, but still maintains close contact.

Genesis offers a comfortable and friendly place to call home for up to two years, giving men the opportunity to become re-established in the life of the community.

Chair of trustees, Alan Lusher, said: "We offer help with everyday things, like getting registered with a doctor and dentist, help with form filling and applying for benefits, linking up with local agencies for addiction counselling, advice about re connecting with family and especially with children, dealing with debts and managing finances, and the many other things that crop up from day to day. "Genesis was founded by Christians with



the purpose of providing not only a home for those without one, but also to express in our daily living the genuine care and concern that we believe God has for every individual. A verse from the Bible that has been an inspiration to us from the beginning is "Remember to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have entertained angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:2).

"There is no expectation that any resident should be a Christian although should a resident express an interest in the faith, we have a chaplain who will help them," said Alan.

"We believe that each man who comes to us is a unique individual, made in the image of God and has the potential to live a successful and fulfilling life. It's then our job to help him to find the best within himself and to encourage him to take that way forward in his life."

You can read more about the charity on its website www.thehouseofgenesis.org

Chance to support Hudson Taylor movie

■ The Hudson Taylor movie is an international drama set in the 19th century about a young British medical student who defies all expectations to share love and, in the process, finds love himself.

An £11m project to develop the film is being led by Christian missionary organisation OMF, which itself is the successor to the work of Hudson Taylor.

Based on the true-life story of Hudson and Maria Taylor, the movie is one of hope and perseverance despite seemingly impossible obstacles and heartbreak. Arriving in Shanghai on China's East coast in 1853, Hudson Taylor from Yorkshire feels called to bring the hope of the Gospel to the people there.

Instead, he quickly learns that he is ill-prepared and must find his way around a new and unfamiliar culture. The story unfolds amidst a tapestry of cultural, ideological, and political conflicts between the East and the West.

Many missionaries and Christian workers recount how God used the

Taylor's life-stories to inspire them to bring the Good News to those who have not heard. We seek to re-tell their stories on the big screen to bring people to faith as well as to inspire a new generation of mission workers.

The movie is currently in development with an engaging script ready for filming once God provides the financial resources. Today professional film making is costly, with a total budget of around £11m.

However, Hudson trusted God for all his finances and said: "I so want you to realise this principle of working with God and asking Him for everything. If the work is at the command of God, then we can go to Him in full confidence for workers; and when God gives the workers we can go to Him for the means to supply their needs."

Today the mission Taylor founded 150 years ago (OMF International) still relies on prayer and faith in God to provide all its needs.

You are invited to join OMF in prayer and by sharing this vision.

Watch a video about the project at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRR9nnW_ppE
Visit the website at: omf.org.uk



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- sepu.org – adventure camp open to all youth aged 12-17, Christian or not
- wordoflife.gracecom.church – daily devotional available online or emailed to your inbox
- equipper.gci.org – equipped for a mission-focused Journey with Jesus
- resources.gci.org – equipping churches for a disciple-making journey with Jesus
- resources.gci.org/we-believe – a Q&A curriculum teaching core beliefs of the Christian faith
- resources.gci.org/pathway – journey with Jesus on the discipleship pathway
- resources.gci.org/leaders – helping church leaders with ministry
- gci.org/articles – articles on a wide array of topics from Jesus, gospel to practical living
- ambascol.org – diploma in Christian ministry course
- learn.gcs.edu – low-cost graduate-level distance-education accredited courses
- thesurprisinggodblog.gci.org – blog on the application of trinitarian theology
- learn.gcs.edu/course/view.php?id=32 – overview of all free resources



GRACE COMMUNION
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Market gardening

■ Norfolk organic vegetable and fruit box company Goodery has launched its own community market garden in Bintree to grow crops to meet an increasing demand for local produce.

Christian entrepreneurs Matti St John and Josh Smith, who have been directing the company since last summer, wanted to fill their veg boxes with more local, organic produce. The problem was that there wasn't enough being grown locally in Norfolk.

Josh said: "We believe that it is part of our calling as Christians to protect people and the environment here in Norfolk, and for us that means protecting the soil we grow our food in, a part of a Biblical command in the book of Genesis. There were growers ready to plant, and the demand for local produce was there, but access to land and capital was a big issue.

"So we decided to grow the produce ourselves by starting a community market garden where growers could be trained, people could come and experience the beauty of na-

ture, and where we can grow really good food to fill our boxes for Norwich and the surrounding areas."

Head Grower Jen joined from nearby market garden Eve's Hill to bring her expertise and the team got started on the land at Bintree in Mid Norfolk in April.

Fields are now planted with rows of organic vegetables and polytunnels are full of tomato, pepper and cucumber plants, with the site looking like it's ready to burst into life.

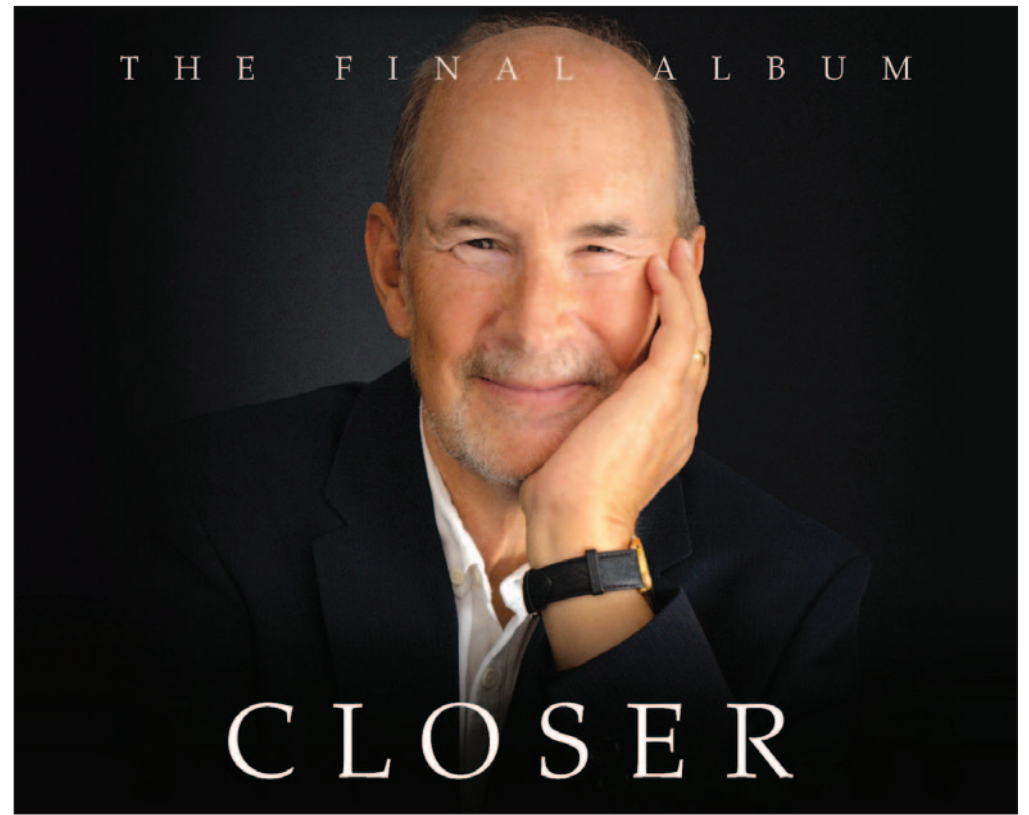
The Goodery team have been opening up the site to volunteers and visitors on Wednesdays and plan an open day in July.

To find out more, email support@goodery.co.uk, tel 01603 363806, or visit goodery.co.uk or [@goodery_uk](https://www.instagram.com/goodery_uk)



Final album as Roger loses cancer fight

Inspirational Norfolk Christian composer and producer, **Roger Mayor**, has lost his battle against cancer, just weeks after releasing his final CD called "Closer". **Keith Morris** reports.



Roger's death was announced on his Facebook page which said: "On Monday June 27, our dearest Roger went to be with his Lord and Saviour. He was comforted by wife Penny and those who loved him dearly. He departed this world in no pain but in total peace.

"Roger was an inspiration to so many and his faith in the Lord was beyond measure. His courage through all that he endured was so inspiring to us and all who knew him closely. He has fought a tough and long fight right to the end.

"Roger's legacy will live on for many years to come especially through the albums he's produced and particularly his final album Closer which is such a beautiful piece of work that he desperately wanted to finish before becoming too sick," said the Facebook message.

Closer was the new concept double-album by Roger, who said that it's release marked the last mile of his four decades of Christian music ministry in leading worship at major national events, composing, arranging and producing. He described it as "The Final Album", and was convinced that only by God's grace and daily strength was he able to complete it in early 2022.

After living with advanced cancer for the past decade, Roger had metastatic spinal cord compression, with cancer spread widely in his spine. This rendered him paralysed below the waist, and affected the use of his right hand as well as sustaining the loss of his feet for pedalling.

Throughout his long battle, Roger acknowledged the unfailing support of Penny, his devoted wife of 20 years. Caring for him 24/7 in their home near Norwich, she made the completion of the new album possible by her single-minded dedication.

"This recording is my sincere attempt to blend music and personal reflections to show that there is always an open door back

to God's heart," said Roger. "The Bible is clear on this point – that if we really want God to draw near, He Himself is the guide through the fog to help us find time and space to draw near to Him.

"Although I have lived with cancer for some years, this album has been recorded and produced under the pressure of recently receiving a terminal prognosis. I am so grateful to God for giving me the strength and deep inner peace in order to complete it."

Closer was the 16th CD that Roger had released over a career spanning 40 years. He was diagnosed with advanced cancer 10 years ago but still managed to live a full and active life for most of that time, which included spells of intensive treatment such as chemotherapy, radium treatment, hormone therapy and radiotherapy.

Occasionally it was gruelling and debilitating, said Roger, but he was determined to continue to use his God-given abilities to bring blessing and encouragement to as many as possible, presenting gospel concerts and recording new albums.

Closer was released as a two-CD set. The first features Roger's very personal reflections with Bible references throughout, and is gently blended with his 12 beautiful music tracks, most of which sounding very much like film music.

On the second CD, the listener can choose to listen to the music tracks alone, without the overlay of the voice. This is the perfect choice for gentle background music, with poignant melodies, soaring harmonies and beautiful orchestrations, featuring the smooth piano stylings that Roger has become so well-known for.

You can buy Closer for £11.99 (two for £20), and find out more about Roger's other work at: www.rogermayor.uk

It is also now available at Spotify, Amazon Music, i-tunes and Deezer.

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Duo team up to make a big success of mentoring scheme

Community Chaplaincy Norfolk (CCN) clocked up a major success when it paired its multi-talented mentor Thomas with Adie, a highly motivated prison leaver. **Eldred Willey reports.**

The two are now reflecting on their first year together and celebrating the many achievements Adie has made in his personal and social life and his volunteer work.

Community Chaplaincy Norfolk (CCN) is a Christian charity that, since 2018, has trained volunteer mentors to support people as they leave prison to live in Norfolk. Thomas completed training in 2021, and soon after CCN Manager Mel Wheeler introduced him to his client, Adie.

Thomas is blind, and one of his first meetings with Adie's ended up being quite eventful when his guide dog, Chester, got confused by the unfamiliar route between St Stephen's Church, where CCN is based, and Thomas' own church. "I didn't know the way either," laughs Adie, "and we ended up down the wrong end of Queen's Road."

"Adie has always been really helpful," adds Thomas, "understanding Chester's responsibilities and how to teach him the route." The trio were eventually rescued by Thomas' wife and have since bonded over their early adventure.

Thomas and Adie realised early on that they shared an interest in music, and Thomas started bringing his guitar to their meetings and teaching Adie how to play. Adie was recently gifted a brand-new guitar by an old school friend, enabling him to practise at home. The pair also share an interest in boats – Thomas lives on a boat with his family, and Adie would like to buy a boat in future and use it as a base for helping people who are struggling with addiction.

In the future, Adie hopes to use his skills and experience to help others. He recently signed up for a counselling course, and Thomas' support helped him to overcome his anxiety about going to register. "I asked Thomas to come with me because he knows me," Adie says, adding that in the end, the experience was a positive one. "The person running the course said that they need people like me. When I do the course, I want to give it 100%."

When asked what the best thing is about the mentoring experience, both men mention the enjoyment they find in each other's company, and the mutual respect and appreciation they

feel for each other. "We just get on," Adie says. "I never lie to Tom."

"It's been nice to spend time with someone who's so open to going through different doors and trying new things," said Thomas, who Adie calls 'Brother Tom.' "I appreciate how positive Adie is, even when going through low points."

"If you didn't have the bad times, you wouldn't know what the good times were," Adie adds. Thomas helps Adie to reflect and focus on the positives, of which there are many, including Adie's volunteering in a local community café and garden, and how this has helped him connect with people and build a support network.

"When you list out all the good things, suddenly your day seems quite positive," Thomas says. "It can help to remember that when things don't seem to be going so well."

"At CCN, we wouldn't be able to do what we do without the enthusiasm and commitment of mentors like Thomas, or the dedication of clients like Adie to changing their lives for the better," says CCN Mentor Coordinator Abby Erwin. "It's inspiring to see what positive difference they have made to each other's lives."

"CCN mentors support their clients in everything from that first, overwhelming day through the prison gate," she adds "to meeting up regularly for a coffee and a chat, or even going to an art gallery or on a dog walk together. Each mentoring relationship is as unique as the people involved."

CCN is currently seeking new mentors to work with people leaving prison and help them to rebuild their lives. "Mentoring is a uniquely varied, challenging and rewarding voluntary role," Abby says. "All our mentors attend an 8-week training course and receive ongoing support in the form of one-to-one supervisions and group meetings. We welcome mentors from all faiths and none, and from all walks of life. We are looking for people over 25 years of age, who are confident and empathetic, IT literate, and who have some relevant experience." CCN's next training course begins on September 6.



Pictured is Thomas, left, teaching Adie the guitar.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, email abby@norfolkchaplaincy.org.uk or visit norfolkchaplaincy.org.uk/volunteering/



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We need a vision of a better future

Andrew Frere-Smith, Development Worker, Imagine Norfolk Together, says we need a new vision to help create a better future for us all.



■ There is a famous verse in the Bible book of Proverbs that in the King James version reads, "Where there is no vision, the people perish". As I look toward the coming months and years, the continual rise in the cost of living and the prohibitive price of fuel and energy, I think it is as relevant today as it ever was. We need a vision of a better future.

The problems we face are not new. Some of us remember the oil crisis of the 1970s. We have seen inflation as high as 25%. We have known people lose their homes and struggle to survive. However, what is new is that these problems are happening today in 2022. The world is very different from 1975 or any other age, old solutions won't work. We have to find new solutions; we need a new vision.

Where there is no vision, the people perish. Many people fear that, next winter, the media will be reporting stories of elderly people freezing to death in their homes and other horrors as families struggle to find enough money to feed their children. There is an urgency in our quest.

Fortunately, there are people all over the country who are seeking to find new creative solutions. Recently, I attended a meeting hosted by the Bishop of Norwich that brought together Norfolk's key leaders from the local authority, police, church and charity sectors.

It was an encouraging time. People were realistic but hopeful. A special kind of energy was generated as the discussion focussed on how we can better partner together, combine resources, and share ideas. It was recognised that even with national problems, the best solutions are often local.

During the pandemic our focus was drawn to our locality, as lockdowns prevented us from travelling, and working from home anchored us to the places where we live. We looked out for others in our street and discovered that people from all spheres of life had very real needs. The notion of community came to the fore.

I believe many of the solutions to our current and imminent problems will be found in sharing the assets we already have in our communities. Support from local authorities, statutory services, churches, and charities will also be essential, but effective change will happen as we pull together in our locality.

A vision for the future will emerge as we listen to one another at every level – central government, local authority, parish and neighbourhood. But as another translation of Proverbs 29:18 points out, what we really need is God's revelation. The NIV puts it this way: "Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction".

Chaplain loves new role

Thinking outside the box comes naturally to **Rhonwen Washford**, Chaplain at Norwich care home Corton House, thanks to her extraordinary family background. **Helen Baldry** reports.

Rhonwen's grandmother was abandoned as a baby on the doorstep of the China Inland Mission in Shanghai. The missionaries took her in and gave her a faith. She recalls many elements of different religions in her grandmother's room – Buddha, the Koran, a crucifix – many of these things gave her strength.

Rhonwen said: "My grandmother taught me it was the Christians that gave her life. She used to take from each faith but told me that Jesus loves me." Her grandmother became an amah – a girl employed by a family to clean and be a nursemaid looking after young children. Rhonwen said: "She was won over a game of cards, the man who won her later went on to marry her, so giving her status in society."

Rhonwen's father and mother met in a prisoner of war camp. She said: "They met and fell in love over a tub of hot water in the prison compound, which was used for the internees laundry."

This dramatic background caused Rhonwen to grow up around sensational stories. She said: "My faith was taught through stories. I love listening." She describes her family as warm and tenacious – they had an openness that was unconventional for suburban Surrey. Family life in England was noisy; a house full of relatives and long mahjong games, with children falling asleep under the table.

Hospitality is big in the Eastern culture, and Rhonwen learnt to apply her faith to her culture and embraces the concept of relating to every person you meet as Christ.

Her faith developed from an early age when she took herself off to a Sunday school run by two sedate Church of England ladies. "I was so naughty and excitable. How they stuck with me I don't know! But they did and they told me stories about Jesus."

Rhonwen listens to the stories of people living at Corton House in her role as Chaplain, which she took on in January. She said: "My affinity to the elderly is all about stories. My faith was taught through stories. I love listening."

She describes it as a huge privilege to be welcomed into their home and to minister to them. They have regular services, including worship and prayer and she is sensitive to the many traditions and backgrounds of the residents. Rhonwen said: "The services are full of joy. The residents love their hymn singing and pray openly. We discuss deep issues, and most of the residents have been faithful church goers, so know the scriptures."

She also visits people in their own rooms and gives communion.

Rhonwen's primary vocation was nursing. She began her nursing training at Barts in 1969, and after marriage and four children, moved to Norfolk where she completed a diploma in nursing in 1999, working at the Norfolk and Norwich hospital, latterly on



Rhonwen Washford, right, with a Corton House resident.

the renal unit.

Rhonwen completed her theology training at the Eastern Regional Ministry Course (ERMC), where she was a senior student.

She has worked at the Ingham, Sutton and Stalham parish and also at Thorpe St Andrew. She was ordained at Norwich Cathedral in 2008. Rhonwen's was a self-supporting ministry because she always

worked as a nurse. She said: "It requires the same skills to be a nurse and a priest. You have to be person-centred. You have to pay attention to the small details. It's a being, not a doing."

Rhonwen draws upon her own experiences of joy, pain and her unconventional background in the way she relates to people. She lost her daughter on New Year's Eve, 2018, aged 46, to alcoholism, and her husband died 10 months later. She said: "Someone told me God chooses his weakest to be his ministers. I think there is strength in vulnerability."

Rhonwen describes herself as "a very excitable person" and a scripture she holds close to her heart is "Be still and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10. She frequently reminds herself of when Jesus took himself off to a quiet place: "resting in the Lord in prayer is one of the most important things in ministry."

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Love affair with big blue Norfolk skies

Norfolk church leader and ex-dentist **Barrie Lawrence** has six daughters and 20 grand-children living in five different countries, but his favourite place is his life-long home under those famous big blue skies. Review by **Keith Morris**.

■ Barrie's new book *Big Blue Sky – A Celebration of Norfolk*, details his over 70-year love affair with his home county of Norfolk. He was born in the south at Ditchingham, now lives in the north at Frettenham and never wants to leave.

An unstoppable author, Barrie's previous tomes have covered the extremely funny side of being a dentist and the sometimes hilarious but often more thoughtful side of life as a leading light in the county's Christian community.

And now he has turned his attention to the mostly amusing sides of life in his beloved Norfolk.

Barrie says: "From the immediate post-war years, I have early memories of a formation of bombers and fighters growling across our Norfolk sky, whilst I innocently caused our chickens to become so drunk that they could not stand up. The local accent can be confusing – a shiver in your finger? – and at times, almost hilarious, with churchgoers sitting in poos, and regular churchgoers sitting in their own poo. If you follow me; if not, read the book.

"I love this county of my birth, and enthruse to relate stories concerning the culture, legends, accent, history, landscape, and more, illustrated through innumerable memories from childhood and later. I trust you will enjoy reading of my romance with Norfolk, lived out under a big blue sky."

Escapades with mates Sludge, Beefy, Shadley and Roger the Rough, and childhood romances with Sandra, Carol, Ann and Sarah are plentiful.

The humorous side of the Norfolk dialect and vocabulary is examined as are some of its more fascinating characters, which are normal for Norfolk, of course.

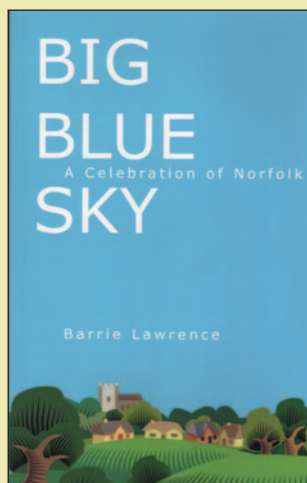
There are brief punchy historical facts about Boudicca, Nelson, Allan Smethurst, Bernard Matthews, Scottish drovers, the Huguenots, coypus, the origins of the Broads – and plenty more – all written in short, easily digestible chunks.

School day japes, holiday memories, bird watching and even the Puppet Man get a mention or two.

Barrie writes: "From an early age I walked, ran, cycled, swam, caught mice, trapped coypu, played golf, chased girls, kicked leaves all under the big blue skies of Norfolk."

Big Blue Sky – A Celebration of Norfolk is available in East Anglian bookshops. 216pp. RRP £9.95. On Amazon or at barrielawrence.com or Barrie will dispatch copies to addresses within the UK for £10, to include p&p.

Contact him at barrielawrence@btinternet.com



Former estate agent is now care trust CEO

A former estate agency MD and now Chief Executive for Aylsham Care Trust since last October, Philip Macdonald believes that God has guided his career since hearing from him in a gospel meeting in his twenties. **Tony Rothe** reports.

Philip was born and brought up in a Christian home in the then coal mining town of Mansfield in Nottinghamshire, where Mum and Dad took him to church each Sunday. By the time he reached his teens, he testifies to believing in God but not really accepting that God could and would make a difference in his daily life.

He graduated from the University of Huddersfield with a degree in Business Law but, deciding that the legal profession was not for him, entered the estate agency profession at the tender age of 21.

It was not until he was 25 that Philip remembers clearly God speaking to him one Saturday evening at a gospel meeting and it was then that he committed his life to Jesus. He says that from that point, he has always tried to live out his faith in various aspects of his life, not that it's always been easy.

Philip spent 13 years as Managing Director of a large estate agency group, comprising 46 branches throughout Norfolk, Suffolk, East Cambridgeshire, and North Essex, responsible for house sales, financial services, lettings and new homes, managing a multi-million-pound business.

Philip is chair of the board of YMCA Norfolk where he has been a trustee for some eight years, working closely with the executive team to deliver a range of services to support young people and to give them the opportunity to develop, grow and thrive.

As an Elder at Surrey Chapel in Norwich, he has chaired the management team at the church for the last ten years. He says "It is rewarding to be working with other members of the leadership as we seek to share the wonderful news of Christ in our community and seek to grow in maturity as a group of God's people".

Philip joined Aylsham Care Trust as Chief Executive in October 2021, a registered charity formed over 35 years ago to support people in Aylsham and the surrounding area to live independently and well and feel a sense of belonging in the community.

Philip said: "I am thrilled to have been given the opportunity to join the ACT team and consider it a real privilege to have been asked to lead the organisation on this next part of its journey. ACT is already established in the community and

our aim is to continue and to grow our services to improve the well-being of the community in and around Aylsham. I am excited about all that lies ahead."

Along with the ACT management team he intends to evolve plans to enhance and develop the range of services provided by the ACT to meet the needs of the community and secure a sustainable future for the trust.

"Amongst other things we hope to extend the provision of our café and we are shortly to apply for registration with the Care Quality Commission to meet the growing demand for care services in the area" he said.



Philip Macdonald.

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Award for heroic Norwich nurse

■ Norwich Emergency Department Staff Nurse Estrella Catalan has been given a posthumous CNO Gold Award by the Chief Nursing Officer for England Ruth May.

Catholic nurse Estrella worked at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and her family are attenders at St John's Cathedral in Norwich. Estrella sadly died of Covid-19 in February 2021 after receiving treatment in the hospital's Critical Care Complex.

Ruth May, Chief Nursing Officer for England said: "It is an honour to dedicate this award to Estrella. Her belief in her profession, dedication to the NHS and her pioneering approach shone through in everything she did and it is absolutely right that she is recognised with this CNO Gold Award."

Prof Nancy Fontaine, Chief Nurse at NNUH, said: "Estrella was a wonderful person and a caring and conscientious nurse, who loved to teach and mentor students; she is missed by all her colleagues who remember her so fondly."

Estrella worked for the hospital for more than 18 years, joining in 2002, after her family moved to the UK from the Philippines.

Christian artist **Tracey Ross** is inspired by her faith and the beautiful North Norfolk countryside, and despite personal set-backs has found success, including setting up a popular online art course. **Tony Rothe** reports.



Tracey Ross in her studio.

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Tracey says her grandmother sowed seeds of faith into her life as a small child. One of her earliest memories of seeing God working through artists was when her grandmother took her to visit one of her Christian artist friends, who showed her an oil painting of Jesus. It left an impression at a very young age.

After leaving school, Tracey studied textile design at Great Yarmouth Art College. Soon after she met her husband, Robert, they married and had three children. Tracey still continued with her art, taking several art and painting classes at Wensum Lodge in Norwich, although she never thought she would become a full-time artist and business woman.

It was when Robert met evangelist John Wright and had a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit that the couple knew things had changed. Tracey says: "One evening we were at a Full Gospel Business Men's dinner, and after the meal I felt the Lord knocking at the door of my heart, saying: 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.' Revelation 3:20 (NKJV)"

"John Wright came over and we prayed, and I accepted Jesus into my life, I will never forget how light and joyful I felt. I felt truly loved and forgiven."

Tracey was always interested in learning, no matter how hard she found it! In her 40s she completed a Visual Studies degree at Norwich University of the Arts and shortly after trained as a teacher in Adult Education. During this time, the family suffered various personal hardships, including a house fire, which were emotionally and financially challenging and hard.

Tracey said: "But God was good. I will never forget the day when he sent a complete stranger to speak to me. She stopped me in the street, where I lived in Old Catton, and spoke into my life, saying that things will be okay and to keep trusting in God and moving forward."

Robert and Tracey restored and sold their house in 2012, and moved to a little flint cottage near Walsingham, where Tracey began

prayer walking and sketching the North Norfolk coast to help her cope with the trauma.

She explains: "It's the place I spend a lot of my time with my sketchbook observing and drawing. It is a place where I feel a connection, a sense of presence. The sketches seem to embrace the power of what I aim to capture, which is the light, atmosphere, and the beauty of a place. When painting, I have to operate in faith, to trust in Jesus and to be empowered, by His hand, and by the Holy Spirit."

"Since moving to North Norfolk my work as a painter in God's kingdom has flourished. My artwork explores the horizon inspired by the huge skies and ever-changing light and atmosphere of North Norfolk. Capturing the joy and beauty of creation is central to my work."

"I believe we are all designed to be creative and have the ability within us to create. Being part of a new Christian community at Salthouse Church is a vision come true. Now is the time to witness and say who God is in my life."

"I had a strong revelation that my gift was to be a painter and that I was called to reveal the beauty of God's Creation as an artist in his kingdom."

Tracey was shortlisted for the National Open Art Competition, was a finalist for the Royal Society of Marine Artists (RSMA), the Holt Art Prize and the Institute of Painters in Water Colours (RI) at the Mall Galleries. Tracey is the founder of 'Paint the Light' - her signature online art course. Her work is held in private collections both in the UK and abroad.

Norfolk Open Studios will run from September 24 to October 9, 2022, and Tracey has a solo exhibition at Salthouse Church from June 15 to 30 2023.

Studio visits are available by appointment and Tracey welcomes enquiries about her summer art workshops in North Norfolk.

For more information:

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