



ANGLICAN RENEWAL MINISTRIES WALES

ADNEWYDDIAD EGLWYSWYR CYMRU

Issue 22 January 2001

Contents

I will lead her into the desert.....and speak tenderly to her.....	2
The Church Today – notes on an address by Nick Jones	4
Whither the rural Church In Wales? By Revd. Ray Smith.....	6
God hears the cry of his children by Marian Barge.....	8
Bruised Reeds and Smoking Flax by Pam Worsey	9
Our work amongst the L.O.S.T. by Bob and Janet Pitcher	11
GIFTS OF MINISTRY PART 1 - PROPHECY by Brian Favell	13
SET FREE THE SPIRIT	16



I will lead her into the desert.....and speak tenderly to her.....

The quotation from Hosea chapter 2 continues with, "There I will give her back her vineyards." This suggests that when she comes out of the desert there is work to do!

Ever since the Flames of Fire conference I have been aware that the time has come to think seriously about coming out of the desert. Several incidents led me to feel that the Lord was in fact calling me out, for this place that so many Christians dread, has become my comfort zone. But how do I come out of the place in which I have come to feel secure, the place where it has been easy to find the Lord.

The desert was chosen as a home by the Desert Fathers as they chose to avoid the excesses of Rome under Constantine. This idea was emulated by Celtic Christians who chose remote parts of Wales to be alone with God. We see evidence of this in place names such as Dysserth and associate their lifestyles with holiness but devoid of possessions and bodily comfort. In that light there is no way that a Twenty-first century Christian equipped with a computer can follow their path, but in the reality of the spiritual journey we can still learn a great deal about ourselves, our needs, our selfishness, and about pain and suffering. If we are willing we can learn too about the suffering of God and His pain as the world goes its own way inflicting pain on itself though almost every action. Such a sharing will bring forth intercessory prayer but not until we have been thoroughly stripped of our desires and our solutions. Taken into a place of helplessness we realise that there is only one appropriate prayer "Thy will be done and thy name glorified". It is a prayer of love and a prayer that the Church has to live as well as say.

In her article "Bruised Reeds and Smoking Flax" Pam Worsey speaks of Brokenness. Before I received her article I knew that we had to look at this desert in all its diversity, for this is our learning place as we prepare for the next Flames of Fire conference. I believe that the Lord would have me say something about how we come out, but this fills me with awe. How can I speak with any authority about something I have been reluctant to do?

I've spoken before of "Preparing the Way of the Lord", the theme of the 2001 conference, as a work we have to do. That work is big enough for us all and your part in it may be very different from mine. In 1998 the Lord gave me a vision of sweeping a roadway, the "broom" was the new "weapon" and I've had to learn how to use it. So it was a cleaning up job and I'm useless at housework! However in the desert I've learned a lot about trusting God and accepting the fact that I can't do it BUT He can. Back in July I was listening to someone speaking on Song of Songs Chapter 5, I realised that I was in the place of testing where He was not directing me and I seemed to be alone. Only then did I see that He was in fact trusting me to put things into practice. This was confusing as I was also aware that He had said, "But you are not willing" in the context of I what I wanted to do at the Flames of Fire conference. It has taken time to understand, for it was so easy to see it as "I was not willing to do it His way". But it was more than that, it was not something to learn it was something to allow.....



After the conference I was drawn to Song of Songs 8:5, I spent time meditating on this, helped by Jerry Rheeder's session and also C.H. Spurgeon's book of sermons on the Songs.

"Who is that coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" Song of Songs 8:5

I discovered that it is often misquoted as "leaning on the arm of her beloved". This gives a comfortable image of a bridal couple but it should actually be an image of surrender, an image of allowing God to do His thing using her body. That is why this is an image of maturity of the bride, a picture of holiness and beauty as described in Ephesians 5:27. The desert or wilderness is the place where each of us needs to be taken so that the Lord can effect this transformation.

The result is truly wonderful but how often have you seen it? Glimpses perhaps but to live in this glory, for it is His glory, is the same as living Galatians 2:20. That crucifixion took place in the desert and now she has to live..... but not her..... Christ living in her.

So do I dare come out of the desert when it is meant to be like this? Can I serve like this? Am I willing? Are you?

The magazine this quarter is a mixed bag and gives glimpses of the many ways we are called to serve. Several aspects of ministry are described, Marian Barge tells of the Christmas outreach in the local village pub and Bob and Janet Pitcher reach out to orphans in Africa. We report on a good session with Nick Jones at the AGM and discover that God has already fed Ray Smith with some ideas for action.

Phil Rees is gently reminding us to wait on the Lord but underneath there is feeding on His word that has to happen in a solitary place so that we can hear the prophetic voice. That voice always calling us to repent and come closer.

But I had space to fill The Lord led me to our dear friend Brian Favell. Many of you will know of his writings in The River and he has graciously consented that I reproduce anything from that source. Although a few years old his series on Ministry in the Church are right for us now and so I start with the Ministry of the Prophet.

So that mixed bag is the Church engaged in the ministry of His choosing and for which He equips us in the desert.

Mary Newsom



The Church Today – notes on an address by Nick Jones

An interactive address given at the ARM (Wales) Annual General Meeting.

by the Revd Nicholas Jones, Rector of Pencoed, Bridgend.

Nick started by reading from Genesis 6:13-22. He said he thought that this passage was appropriate for us today - us being the Church in Wales, but not just the Anglicans. In one sense it was appropriate because it was about the Flood, and we had all seen a lot of that lately. But the main point was that it was about God telling Noah exactly what he should do, and as it says in verse 22: Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

Nick had been hearing a lot about what God is doing in Wales recently. In Bridgend he has had a group of forty pastors from Indonesia, who heard a call from God to pray for Wales. They didn't just get down and pray in Indonesia, they came to Wales to do it; and so far they have come five times, at their own expense. Much of what they had to say was about prayer. In Indonesia they have prayer towers, which are manned twenty four hours a day by priests and prophets and other functionaries. He has also met a South American who has come specifically to pray for Wales in fulfilment of what started in 1904. Sadly, we don't seem to have the same enthusiasm here in Wales.

Nick posed the question: "What are we doing in our local churches and dioceses and in ARM (Wales)? Are we ready to do what God wants - are we ready to teach and nurture newcomers, for example?"

A few years ago, when Nick first became an incumbent, he found that everybody expected him to make decisions. Eventually he contacted a couple of clergy friends and they met and prayed together. They formed a diocesan renewal team, and discovered that there were other clergy who were into renewal but were isolated and in need of support. They wanted to encourage them, because it is so easy to become isolated - clergy fear that if they stick their necks out and do something different, they will get criticised. Now they have a clergy support group which holds monthly meetings; they go around the parishes ministering in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is very important for the Church to have clergy in renewal, for the sake of the lay people; and we also need lay support teams.

When Nick first moved to Pencoed he made contact with leaders of the free churches in the Bridgend area; they began meeting together and praying for revival. Then there is also the New Wine Network, which is encouraging people into renewal, and which has organised a gathering at Hebron Hall on 26th March next year. Thus there seems to be a number of strands which are coming together and leading us in the direction to which God is pointing, towards renewal and revival; and we should run with it!

Next Nick divided us into groups of six, carefully excluding colleagues and spouses, so that we could share with each other what is going on, in the churches, in our area. Maybe, he



said, we shall hear something new and encouraging; maybe we shall find some common ground; maybe we shall discover some needs. Little did he know.....

Group 1 told us about a carol service in a pub. What a wonderful idea!

Group 2 said that it could be very frustrating for lay people if they wanted renewal and their vicar was just not interested in it.

Group 3 said where there was a need for a clergy support group they should ask the church. If the congregation understand their vicar's problems then they are in the best position to offer both prayer and practical support.

Group 4 said there was a general need for support, and lay people feel unsupported when their vicar is like the one in group 2.

Group 5 said that many of our church services are not friendly towards newcomers. Every church should have two services on a Sunday: one of the traditional kind and one that is more free and open. Also, clergy can be a bottleneck in restricting the flow of the Holy Spirit. Ideally the clergy should be attached to deaneries and allow the lay people to run each parish church. One lady had a vision of the Church as a conical flask with the PCC and the people inside, and the stopper was the Vicar. What could we do about it? Answer: push the stopper out!

Group 6 again emphasised the feeling of isolation experienced by a lay person who may be the only one seeking renewal in a congregation of twenty.

In the general discussion that followed, one lady told us the answer to these problems is to start a prayer fellowship in your own home; she has had one going for twenty five years and is now able to organise a bus-load to come to the Flames of Fire Conference. Another group have a morning prayer gathering in a house in their village, which includes Anglicans, Chapel and Pentecostals - and the Holy Spirit really moves amongst them.

Overall, vicars seemed to be getting a lot of stick in these discussions, and we were reminded that some congregations do expect the Vicar to do everything, (mainly because successive vicars had taught them that way). In the general discussion we were urged to use the clergy to train the laity to lead; and we were reminded that in 1999, Bishop Graham Dow said at our Conference that he would allow people to try out their ministries before they go for training, to make sure that they were suited for it.

In the final stages of the discussion, we were given some words: Mercy triumphs over judgement - we should beware judging people and condemning those who do not agree with our way of thinking. We must also remember: Noah did everything just as God commanded him, and obey God in all details.



Finally each group used these thoughts to pray for each other; and then the Meeting prayed for the new Executive Committee. The whole session was a very moving and rewarding experience and we are very grateful to Nick for serving us in this way.

Brian Newsom.

Whither the rural Church In Wales? By Revd. Ray Smith

(Editors note. The following article was received before the A.G.M. reported above.)

If you speak to any older person in the villages, they will recount how before the 1950s, every village had its own incumbent living in the local vicarage. Since then all has changed. Now many rural incumbents have to look after several villages and parish churches. If we examine the ages of existing clergy and compare that with the numbers of those being ordained, we can see that in the foreseeable future, we shall have far fewer clergy available for the country areas. They will become as rare as the rural 'bobby'.

Thanks to the Renewal Movement, all need not be lost. The re-awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit has meant that such passages in the Bible as Romans 12 v 4-8, 1 Corinthians 12 v 7-11 Ephesians 4 v 1 - 13 with their emphasis on every member ministry have taken on a new meaning. In these passages is laid out the expectation that within each church there will be a team of people exercising ministries, gifts, and leadership. Modern scholarship has demonstrated that many of the congregations that Paul was writing to were small in size - frequently comparable to that of a modern country congregation. Yet Paul expected that under the activity of the Holy Spirit a full complement of ministries and gifts would be exhibited. Why not today?

To return to New Testament experiences would require a mighty revolution in attitudes.

For the person in the pew, it would mean that they came to church not just to sit but to be fully involved. (To create this attitude we might have to redesign our churches because they give the impression of the schoolroom, the parson-schoolmaster up front and the congregation-scholars in neat rows in front of him; so encouraging passivity) To move nearer to the New Testament picture, each congregation could nominate to the Bishop, several of its members to be trained to lead worship. They would be responsible for the conduct of the majority of services. Others would be responsible for the pastoral care of the community. Those licensed would be for a limited number of years. The main learning method would be through the mid week study group rather than the sermon.

For the Priest, it would mean that except from time to time celebrating Holy Communion in each of the congregations under his or her care, the main role would be to be a trainer and

All material is copyright of its creator and permission must be sought before it is reproduced. Please use the "Contact Us" page on our website www.anglicanrenewalministries-wales.org.uk in order to gain such permission.



enabler of the congregation. Instead of being the performer, the priest's role would be that of helping the congregation to fulfill their potential and ministry under the Holy Spirit. It would become more an oversight role. For the majority of clergy this would mean not simply a change in their thinking but also there would need to be much training to develop these oversight skills. Each group of licensed worship leaders would meet on a regular basis with the incumbent to plan and prepare the worship.

In 1 Corinthians 14 v 26, the picture Paul gives of worship is like the performance of an orchestra, all the musicians blending to produce the beautiful sound of worship.

Perhaps we might make our way back to such a situation and what is suggested may provide a possible way to attain that goal.

It may be said that the rural scene could not produce people from the congregation to exercise such gifts and ministries. How is it that the country areas have produced the Women's Institute and the Young Farmers Clubs with their wealth of leadership. Could it be a case of James 4 v 2 being fulfilled you do not have because you do not ask God. ?



God hears the cry of his children by Marian Barge

Many of you will know that at the A.G.M. I was not a very “happy chappie...” All the odds seemed stacked against me. Someone, (and we all know who), was trying to undermine the work I was planning and deceiving me into thinking that no-one cared. At that meeting I poured out my heart to the group I was with. Since being ordained I seem to have been alone. Nick Jones, our speaker, had talked of the wonderful things that were happening in Llandaff.....nothing, it seemed to me, was happening in Monmouth.

But that night, as I lay in bed, God gave me the name of a priest in our deanery. I asked God for confirmation as to whether I was to contact him. Two days later I met Kath Shenton, from Bridgend, and she asked after this priest, as she knew him! God gave me that confirmation and I met up with him and we had a great time, I had found some human support.

The other problem that had seemed insurmountable was the work I was endeavouring to do in Wyllie. Wyllie is a village on the side of the mountain, consisting of two hundred and ninety houses, one pub, a post office, which opens twice a week. There is no Christian input whatsoever. I have been given the task of evangelising this area. The Landlord of the pub gave me permission to hold a Carol Service in his dining room. I fixed the date, had all the publicity set up and then the Landlord changed the date. Help.....Everything that could go wrong then went wrong. I seemed unable to make headway. Then a fortnight after my cry for help, I went to the Brecon Renewal Day and was introduced to a lady who had just moved from South Africa.....Guess where to? Yes to Wyllie. Praise the Lord!!

My last problem was solved by a ‘phone call to our Chris Daniel. A change of date meant that I had no musicians, but Chris and his wife Brenda came all the way from Swansea and Chris led the worship at the carol service in Wyllie. So thank you Chris and Brenda, may God bless you for what you did that night.

Fifty or sixty people came to that service, it was wonderful and so blessed by God. I am hoping that I will soon be able to get something going on a regular basis...Please pray for that..

So God is not deaf, he hears our cries for help..... but we have to ask.

Brian and I would like to send our best wishes for 2001 to all our friends in A.R.M.

Your sister in Christ, Marian.



Bruised Reeds and Smoking Flax by Pam Worsey

Has Father taken you down to the Potter's House lately? He often takes me there. Have you been broken on the wheel of life until you wonder just what is happening to you? Then maybe, just maybe, the Holy Spirit will have a word of strength and comfort to whisper to your soul as you read on. There will be nothing new in what you read, no deep theological teaching; I'm incapable of anything remotely like that, but sometimes, the way God has led, supported and comforted another, can be just the strengthening word we need as we face life's struggles. So may I just tell of a few things He has taught me through the wilderness experiences we must all go through for Christ to be formed in us, and share some of the comfort He desires to bring to some for whom this article is written.

Are you thinking that you must be especially sinful for God to have to treat you so apparently harshly, and that maybe He isn't able to love you as much as that sweet Christian you so admire, because there is so much wrong with you? God's answer is that when we were all still dead in our sins, Christ died for us, (Rom.5:8). Do you remember how it was the Holy Spirit led Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, into the wilderness, so empowering Him through the experience that He came out full of the power of the Spirit, (Luke 4:1&14)? The same Holy Spirit says to us through the words of Hosea in (Ch.2:14-15) that it is God who allures us into our wildernesses, so that there, in those very desert experiences, He can 'speak tenderly' to us, in ways which would never be possible without. Do you hear the loving invitation of the Father through those words, spoken - just to you? He it is who invites us down to the Potter's House or into the wilderness, where He can minister to us in our brokenness in ways we never dreamed possible. We can choose not to be broken if we so wish, but we do so at our peril, for it is these very breaking experiences, when God moulds and reshapes us, that He uses to keep us soft and pliable in His gentle, loving Hands. To refuse to be broken leaves us hard, unbending and possibly therefore unusable. Jesus invites us to take up our Cross and follow Him.

Do you remember Job's words? "When He has tried/tested me, I shall come forth as gold"!! (Job 23:10) and "Though He slay me, YET will I trust/hope in Him"!! (Job 13:15) This is so true. There are many crucibles in life that God chooses and uses to burn off our dross. Maybe you, or someone very dear to you is seriously ill at the moment and knowing Jesus heals, you cannot understand why you still suffer. God's timing and purposes are different from ours, but as He gently and lovingly moulds us more to His ways, glimmers of understanding begin to come; and how quickly He responds to the cry of His feeble children as we pray for grace to persevere while praising, and to love while learning. Maybe yours is the crushing experience of bereavement or divorce, when tenderly and gently the Holy Spirit would come alongside to strengthen, whispering those wonderful words "A bruised reed He will not break, and a smouldering flax He will not snuff out" (Is.42:3) Sometimes God uses the misunderstandings of others to gently break and remake us, and these can be particularly devastating, especially when they come, as they so very often do, through other Christians. Again He comes alongside to reassure of His unfailing love and that everything He allows to happen, has had to pass through the sifting of that love, so will therefore be part of His plan to perfect us. How can we learn to react with love, grace, forgiveness and



humility unless we pass through these fires. Grapes have to be crushed for the juice to be extracted in readiness for a delicious wine. Doesn't this remind us of our Blessed Saviour, who suffered so terribly and whose Precious Blood flowed for us, even as His Body was broken. We follow a Saviour with scars Who so understands our woundedness. Jesus was wounded for us let us remember.

For some, financial disasters or loss of employment might be the wilderness through which you are now being led, as Father teaches the lesson of total dependence on Him, even as He led the children of Israel through a desert, where their food and water had to be supernaturally supplied. We serve the same Lord today. He hasn't changed, and He is longing for us to develop a simple child-like trust in His loving care and provision. After all, Jesus did tell us to seek first His Kingdom and all these things would be added. He knows our physical needs as He created us, and we have yet to move in true faith as a Church, totally trusting the Lord. Lord we believe, help our unbelief we pray.

One of the most difficult wildernesses through which the Lord takes us is that of apparently unanswered prayer. Surely all prayer is answered, even if it has to be with a 'no', but Father knows best, and sometimes, when He seems to be withdrawing His blessings, turning a deaf ear and appears to our limited finite minds, to be displeased with us, we may actually be passing through a time of greatest blessing. How can we grow strong in Him, strong in faith and character, unless that character is tested to what may seem to us beyond our limits? It isn't, because Divine love is taking us through the test and 'you'll never walk alone' as the song says, or better still, in the words of Jesus, "Lo, I am with you always" (Matt.28:20b). We are also told in (Heb.13:5b) that God has said, "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you". What promises! Maybe someone reading this today, just needs to hear those words afresh in the difficult circumstances in which you find yourself.

It could be, that having read the above, and not having experienced many of life's blows, an element of fear might try and creep in as you wonder what awful thing you have yet to go through. Fear is not of God, except the healthy fear which protects us from danger. If Father knows we have need of refining in a certain way for the work He desires to do through us and for Christ to be more fully formed in us, He can be trusted to do it in the right way and at the right time in our lives.

So, as we gather these thoughts together, let us remind ourselves that we gain strength for the times ahead through being broken and breaking is NOT evidence that God hates us, but of His love for us! "Those whom He loves He chastens" (Heb.12:6) He cares so much that He longs to refine, purify and perfect us so that He can use us for His Glory! Jesus, is the pure and perfect Son of God as we all know, yet we are told, "Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from what He suffered" (Heb.5:8) Can we expect less? In the psalms we read, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I obey Your Word. You are GOOD and what You do is GOOD" (Ps.119:67-68)



Lord, take us down to the Potter's House, or into the wilderness with You. Help us to be pliable in Your Hands and obedient to Your will without reservation, knowing Your way is always best. Everything You do is love, even when we do not understand You.

Our work amongst the L.O.S.T. by Bob and Janet Pitcher

LOST stands for...Lango Orphans Scholarship Trust; and Lango Diocese covers two districts, Lira and Apach in the rural north of Uganda. Lira is troubled by rebel activity, aids and cattle rustlers from a neighbouring tribe one in six people are orphans.

As a result of the Welsh SOMA trip in '94 Bob made strong links with that area*. SOMA does not usually return to the same place twice BUT it did two years later and Bob went again. So these links were deepened further and this Trust is the result. Bob has now come out of SOMA in order to concentrate on this one area.

Also our church Mothers' Union has an official link with a MU in the area and in October 2000, we took three members of our church, Gaynor & Allwyn Williams and Wendy Thomas to visit this link, visit the orphans and school, and be inspired and invigorated by the lovely Christians there. We aim for one or both of us to visit every year to monitor the trust.

We fund fifty orphans...schooling, school clothes, food supplements, basic medical care and placement in a Christian family. Thirty-five of these are directly funded by sponsors (£200 per year) and the rest are from general fund raising.

We already have a nursery school and this year we have taken on the raising of the teachers salary to a realistic level. So people can also sponsor a teacher. (£144 per year).

We also have a project to build a junior school and land has been purchased to that effect. There is also a Vocational training group for those students who do not want to go on to university training but want a more practical career. This is an apprenticeship scheme that teaches, brick laying, decorating and carpentry.

Our recent mission was an exciting and rewarding time. On our way over to Uganda, British Airways kindly showed us the BBC, 6 'o' clock news in which we discovered an outbreak of Ebola in Gulu, only forty miles away from our destination. This gained our attention and so on the first day in Kampala we rang the British Embassy who told us in no uncertain terms that we were not to go near Lira since it looked very much as if the virus had spread over all of that area. And anyway, without wishing to be over dramatic, we didn't relish the thought of being the agency which would bring it back to the West. So we

All material is copyright of its creator and permission must be sought before it is reproduced. Please use the "Contact Us" page on our website www.anglicanrenewalministries-wales.org.uk in order to gain such permission.



were somewhat confused. Assured in our hearts that God had called us there, but unable to reach the people which we believed we were called to.....so we prayed.

As a result, during the first week, a programme of school visits was organised in the Mukono area where we were able to witness to Christ and a number of young people gave their hearts to the Lord. We were also able to visit the YWAM centre in Jinja where Katy from Swansea had died of malaria a few years ago. She was the daughter of a friend of Wendy's and we were able to hold a memorial service for her, plant a tree, and video the service for the parents back in Swansea. So our first week was not wasted.

News reports showed that the Ebola outbreak had been contained within the Gulu district and so it was decided that we would be safe to go to Lira for six days and have a condensed programme. We attempted the trip on the Tuesday but vehicle problems forced our return to Kampala, but we made it all the way on the Wednesday. It was a delight to return to the lovely Lango people and to find the Orphan Project functioning well. We met most of the orphans and guardians and had a party at Karidali school for them.

L.O.S.T is really Janet's major ministry and she came into her own with consummate organisational and administrative skills catching up on twelve months news and recording it for the sponsors. Sadly not all the orphans were able to be there because of our change of timetable. Thirteen goats were given to the most needy guardians and we were able to equip the school with equipment, teaching aids and were also able to give the staff a well needed pay rise! We took a number of church services and again people offered their lives to the Lord publicly and received Him into their hearts. God especially anointed our singing, (truly a miracle), and also Wendy's testimony which touched the hearts of many who listened.

We had a good day with our Mothers' Union link parish at Appii which was, however, overwhelmed by a very exuberant Mothers' Union Membership, who constantly ran at us with high pitched blood curdling cries waving long sticks above their heads like ancient spears. This was all great fun but not necessarily the right ambience for preaching the Gospel.

Gaynor's speech was interrupted for twenty minutes by rain but she continued afterwards with stoic determination. Our vehicle broke down in the dark on the way back to Lira, so we soon got the attention of the local defence force (it is technically a war zone) and also the Bishop elect who just happened along that road and stopped to give assistance.

The final part of our mission was a lengthy journey to the Rwanda border. On the way we visited Rukunjiri where two friends run a huge orphan project and school. We were amazed by the resources God had provided for them and the strength and joy of Faith exhibited by Alice and John. Then down to Kisoro where three countries, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda meet. We misjudged the distance and ended the journey in darkness and heavy rain, travelling through a forest which is the home to silver back gorilla's and rebel guerrilla's. It felt a bit lonely in the gloom but God whispered His



presence to us and proclaimed it loudly through Wendy and Gaynor's singing. The jungle was followed by a mountain pass only dreamed about in Indiana Jones movies; sheer drops alongside slippery muddy tracks. Psalm singing rose to a new fervour!

Our time in Kisoro was blessed by it being in one of the most beautiful places in God's creation amongst people who again were so willing to give their hearts to Him in response to our ministry.

Uganda has noticeably progressed over the six years we have had the privilege to travel there. There is still much heart rending poverty in addition to disasters and massacres which still occur from time to time but their direction is most definitely upwards.

The church is still bulging at its seams and resounds with glorious praises, but needs resources and teaching from the West. We have again left another large piece of our hearts there and have returned to Wales renewed but carrying in our heads the lasting echoes of a people emerging from the darkness into His glorious light.

* many of you will remember Johnson Ebong-Oming who came to Dolfor in 1995. He is the founder of L.O.S.T.

[If any of our members would like to become involved they can contact Janet for an information pack. You don't have to sponsor long term. Examples of short term projects are: to build a classroom.... buy a bike...pay for a sewing machine.... etc.

GIFTS OF MINISTRY PART 1 - PROPHECY by Brian Favell

Ministry has to do with the moving, feeding, guiding and empowering of the local church in its work of mission to a dying world. We no longer expect it to be merely the province of ordained clergy: it is undertaken largely by lay members of a church, but how those lay members are themselves chosen, trained and empowered varies a great deal from place to place. Training courses at church and diocesan level abound, but unfortunately too often the part of the Holy Spirit is misunderstood or ignored and emphasis remains on human learning and fashions.

In places where the Holy Spirit is honoured and his gifts valued, we may get the opposite error of elevating individuals who manifest those gifts until they become mini-gurus, answerable to the Spirit only! To help bring balance and order into this situation I have dug

All material is copyright of its creator and permission must be sought before it is reproduced. Please use the "Contact Us" page on our website www.anglicanrenewalministries-wales.org.uk in order to gain such permission.



out some teachings on the subject which I was given quite some years ago. It is NOT my teaching: I had it from some friends in the States who had found it of great value. I have done no more than condense and re-frame it around English situations and idioms in place of the American ones. I offer my thanks again to Ted Nelson and his Church of the Resurrection in Dallas, Texas (a very big and active Episcopalian - American C. of E - church) for making it available.

There will be seven articles based on St. Paul's list of ministries in Romans 12.4 - 8, in the order of that list.

One thing must be emphasised: these are not gifts possessed by this or that person for use as he/she wills: they are given by God to the local Church, the Body of Christ, for that Church's up-building and growth. Since they cannot be held in vacuo, they are manifested to different degrees by various members of the local Body, but are held in trust to be used for the Body. Every single member of a Church has the potential - indeed the calling - from by God to minister in at least one of the ways described. And this potential exists equally in clergy and lay, men and women, young and old: it is the basic equipment of ministry which is for ALL Christians. Most people will have symptoms, as it were, of several; but each one of us has one which at this time and place is the main pattern of his or her ministry.

My purpose in printing these articles is to help churches (NOT individuals) to recognise these main ones and develop them. In a given church there will not be equal numbers of prophets, leaders, servants etc. (there are few churches which could stand having 14 prophets for every hundred in the congregation!), but there should be at least one or two prophets, and maybe quite a lot of servants. But let the Body discern who is what - not the Vicar or the PCC or any individual. Particularly let nobody try to look inside him/herself to discover a ministry. Without the careful and patient discernment of the Body (moved by the Spirit) they will almost certainly get it wrong!

Finally, I am here writing about ministries and our calling to them, NOT about the nine Gifts in 1 Corinthians. As I understand things, the nine Gifts are tools, not ministries. We need to wield first one, then another and another in the course of each and every ministry, and must therefore be ready and willing to learn the skills attached to a number of them. But our occasional use by the Spirit to give a word of prophecy, for instance, does not, praise God, make us Prophets! And if you want to know why I put it like that, read on

PART 1 - PROPHECY

..... And this does NOT mean putting on a hair shirt, eating locusts in the wilderness and standing up every so often in a church service or the P.C.C. to declaim in condemnatory tones, "THUS SAYS THE LORD....."



Take a look at Deuteronomy 18 verse 22, then 1 Corinthians 14 verse 3; finally 2 Peter 1 verse 19.

Having done that, what are the marks of a prophet?

First: he is driven to speak, to say what he knows MUST be said. And often he doesn't want to: he knows what he must say will hurt himself as well as others. The only thing is it hurts him much more to keep silence. As an example, take a look at the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18 verses 7 onwards). And read it bearing in mind that God told Elijah what to say and do..... BUT NOT what God was going to do, or what would happen to Elijah. Imagine him going to Ahab in the first place..... virtually asking to be locked up or killed. And imagine him having to tell the slaves to pour barrels of water over the sacrifice without any idea what God would really do. Not to mention the hours of waiting - the going to look seven times for a sign - before the first cloud was seen at the horizon.

Even if speaking means losing his job or getting himself executed, a prophet CANNOT keep bottled up in himself what must be said.

He has the gift of seeing inside people: he sees their character, their motives, their good, their faults. And whatever he sees, he loves them. He sees them with Christ's eyes and loves them with his heart. And because of that love he gets torn to bits inside by his understanding of the damage their sins are doing to them. Out of that hurt, that understanding and compassion he HAS to speak: consoling, comforting; or exposing and rebuking evil.

He is himself willing to be broken: it has happened to him before and it will happen again. But because he knows that this is the essential pattern of growth in Christ he has accepted it for himself, and because he has gone through the process he can lead others through it; indeed will do even though he shares in their hurts.

He is rooted and grounded in Scripture: not just parroting of proof texts but heart and soul immersed in the essential truths of Scripture. You will never find him contradicting those truths, manipulating them or watering them down.

But mere words are not enough: when someone comes to see and accept the truth of what he has had to say, a prophet wants to see ACTION as evidence of genuine response. In this he can be most un-Anglican!

His words are direct, open - not wrapped in cotton wool. He goes straight to the heart of the matter, and your heart too. He is concerned for God's reputation in the world. A sloppy service or woolly preaching on television, a Christian publicly 'letting God down' in speech or action..... A prophet's reaction to these is "What does this make God look like? How are we going to get the world to take God seriously when we do things like this?"



A prophet is likely to be glad - genuinely - when someone tells him where he is at fault (it probably takes another prophet to dare to do it!). He sees his own faults as separating him from truth and from God, and he wants to know his faults so that they can be dealt with.

A prophet is misunderstood. His particular qualities lead others to think of him as harsh, intolerant, 'holier-than-thou'. His over-riding concern for truth will be seen as rigidity, lack of tolerance, evidence of a closed mind. His emphasis on action in response to conviction of truth (rather than mere mental assent) may seem crude, insensitive, gimmicky. It may not be obvious to others that he is as harsh with his own faults as with theirs.

And of course these criticisms - some anyway - may be true. These are the ways in which he is most likely to fail. Pride is a particular danger for him - or her; for although so far I have only said 'he' or 'him', men have no monopoly: there are women prophets and there always were (though a Women's Libber might do well to think twice before demanding that God shall make her one - read about Elijah again - the bit after the contention with the priests of Baal!).

One more thing. No one will have all these qualities fully developed. One or two will stand out while others ring only a faint bell. But in one who is called to this ministry, willingness to accept the call will bring developments.

And a final warning: a prophet above all ministers must have love - Christ's love - in great measure; without it he falls very far..

[Editors note: Brian is a former Organising Secretary of A.R.M.(Wales)1985-91]

SET FREE THE SPIRIT

We don't wait for angels nor look for a star,
but praise the Eternal, who sent from afar.
For secular man these are no doubt a sham,
but such men are blind to our God, the I AM
who, present on mountain top, cradle or cross
is he who devised us and made us - the BOSS!

For angel and star are no more and no less
than creatures of God, as we are - the mess
that we make of our world, ourselves and our plans
is evidence clear not of God's lack, but man's!
While hidden yet present, unseen by the blind,
unheard by the deaf, waits the Lord of mankind.

All material is copyright of its creator and permission must be sought before it is reproduced. Please use the "Contact Us" page on our website www.anglicanrenewalministries-wales.org.uk in order to gain such permission.



While all these good people from workbench and sink
have been taught by our wise men - so wise! - just to think
that the fate of the world, its salvation and theirs,
depends on their muscle, their thoughts and their wares.

Yet unwelcome still, the power of the Lord
awaits with his Spirit to unsheathe his sword.

God offers again his Spirit, his Sword
and sadly looks on as these are ignored.
while we in our ignorance, pride and self-will
rely on our intellect, wisdom and skill.

And God stands and weeps at his work still undone

(with apologies to the author who is unknown)