

The Link

Nazarene Theological College

Autumn, 2020

07 **Beth's Story**

From spiritual restlessness to budding theologian

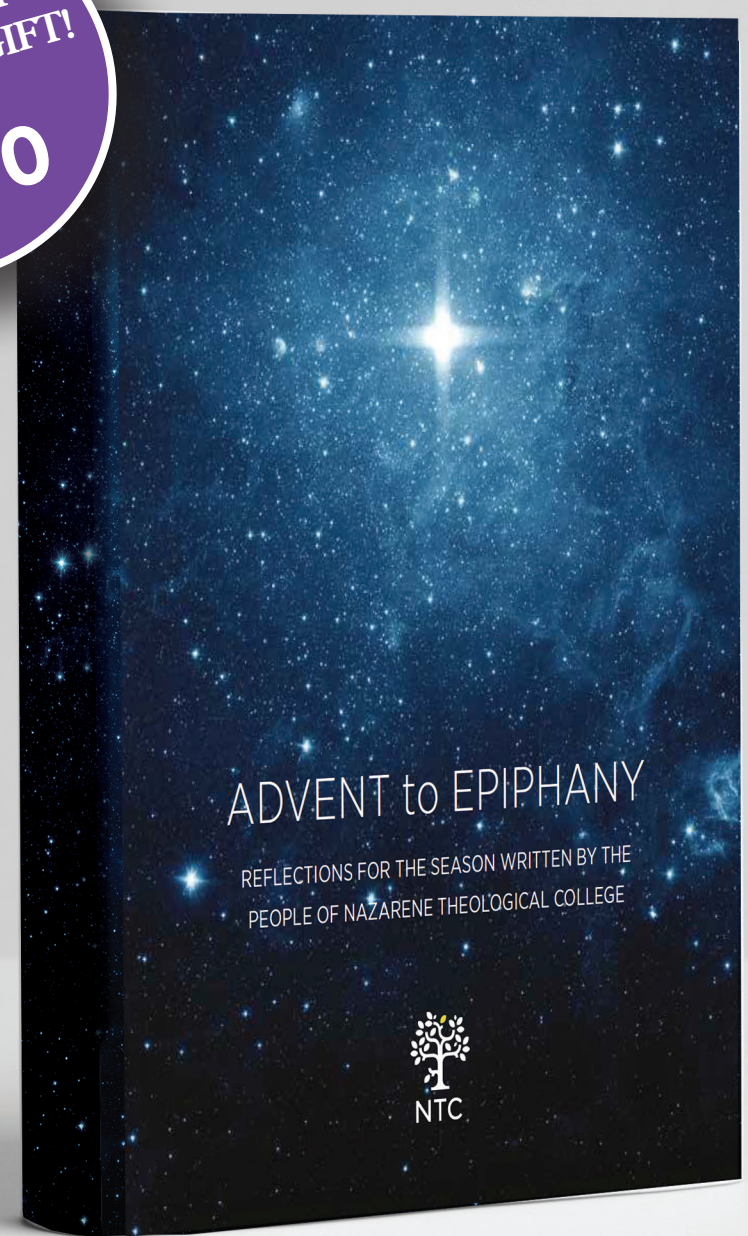
31 **Dieudonne's Story**

Evangelising through justice

39 **Resilience: Another word for steadfast love?**

Revd Dr Deirdre Brower Latz

A PERFECT
SEASONAL GIFT!
only
£7.50



ADVENT to EPIPHANY

These brief reflections offered by the people of Nazarene Theological College, reflecting on selected scripture readings for this season of the year, will inspire, comfort, challenge, and prepare you for the future, knowing that all will be well.

To purchase your copy and help support NTC please visit:
www.nazarene.ac.uk/advent or call: +44 (0)161 445 3063

All profits from sales will go towards the 2020-21 Principal's Project (see page 04). Your order can be collected from NTC or delivery options are available with further costs.



WELCOME

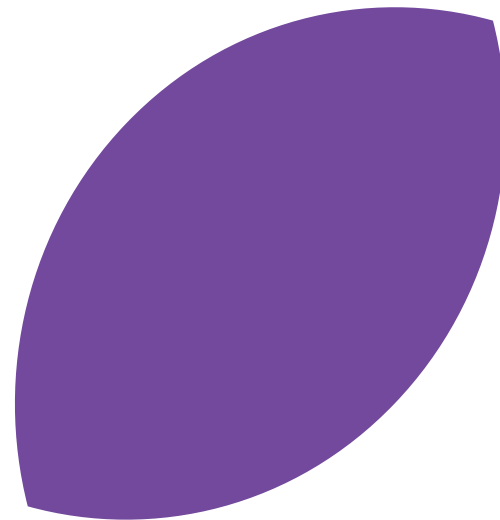
NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, MANCHESTER

www.nazarene.ac.uk



- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 05 Hasn't it been strange?
Revd Dr Deirdre Brower Latz | 17 Shirley's Story
Called to serve her local community | 37 One new humanity
Ezekiel Shibemba |
| 07 Beth's Story
From spiritual restlessness to budding theologian | 25 Jacob's Story
Equipped for relational mission | 39 Resilience: Another word for steadfast love?
Revd Dr Deirdre Brower Latz |
| 11 Cosmos's Story
Called in his father's footsteps | 31 Dieudonne's Story
Evangelising through justice | |

The Link would like to thank all who contributed to this edition and to Gina Pottinger for writing the student stories.



DEAR FRIENDS – HOW ON EARTH CAN WE THANK YOU!

Your generous giving over time meant that we achieved our hoped for 75k for 75 years of service to the Church. What an unsurpassable gift you've given us.

In this most strange of times to have such an amount has been beyond helpful! You've literally helped us help students who were struggling, relieve burdens of cash flow (like every institution has been facing) BUT above all you served as a family would: there for us in trying times. Whenever we talk about our identity as Nazarenes I continually say – 'this is our family'. Thank you from the bottom of my heart – and on behalf of our team, I echo the Ephesians' prayer:

'ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.'

Revd Dr Deirdre Brower Latz
Principal, Nazarene Theological College

PRINCIPAL'S PROJECT 2020 - 2021

AND... INTRODUCING OUR NEXT MIRACLE STORY!



LET'S RAISE THE ROOF!

A roof raised! The genteel old lady of the White House has been an incredible gift to NTC. Ever since Dr Hugh Rae and others had the vision, put their backs into it, it has served as home, dining room, kitchen, family accommodation, warden's flats, studies, PhD-examinations, parties, wedding reception venues, funeral space... It has become revamped with posh new reception areas and shiny radiators, polished oak seamlessly next to comfy chairs, and sleek photocopiers wirelessly connected... It's a hub, a centre, and it breathes!

I think that when the building hears voices it almost smiles and it makes me think of the Psalms... and poets – 'these walls cry out...' or... 'the tales it could tell.' But – its 114 year old roof is sagging a bit... Who can blame it? We'd creak too if we were holding up the weight of hope on our shoulders – and so, we're going to fix it. Of course, because of its dignity – fixing it isn't a duck tape, spit and polish job. Instead, laboriously and with craftsmanship, piece by piece it will be taken down and rebuilt... **To do this, we need your help...**

To help us raise the roof please visit:

www.nazarene.ac.uk/raisetherooft

or call: +44 (0)161 445 3063



LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

HASN'T IT BEEN STRANGE?

REVD DR DEIRDRE BROWER LATZ



Welcome to the Autumn 2020 edition of The Link. As I write, I am full of mixed emotions: above all I am thankful for you, our dear readers. I am grateful for the technology enabling us to capture the stories of what God is doing around the world. I delight in the witness, the thinking, the ability to communicate, and I'm grateful to be able to read!

But ... there's true sadness that we can't deliver it to you in person or put it on your seats during our graduation! We are so SAD not to see one another in the flesh – I expect you are too! And yet...

If this time has taught us anything it's that the people we meet, the touch of a handshake, the possibility of a hug, all are beyond value. And, we've also learned that our connections and the love we share transcend physical presence. More than ever, I am aware of the weaving together of our lives in a beautiful tapestry of witness: the resilience of people of faith, the prayers of God's folk, and our courage to love our neighbours in real ways.

I'm mindful that we have beloved community members in Lebanon, pouring their lives into others.

Of course, as I write, there are enormous crises in different places of the world. I'm mindful that we have beloved community members in Lebanon, pouring their lives into others. I'm aware of students and graduates on the West Coast of America, fighting to breathe through smoke. I know we have students scattered across the creative and amazing continent of Africa, who have grappled with Ebola and have much to teach us, about resilience and pandemics but also of the needs they

serve. I know too that we've all come face to face with matters of race and have determined to live in faithful anti-racist ways. I am aware that in our sprawling Christian family there have been acute losses. People we love called home to carry on their resurrection story, and I know that grief is searing when we no longer see in the flesh the ones we love.

For many, we've wrestled with new economic realities: changed economies, changed national realities, different personal circumstances facing us. In all of this, I hear the descriptions of fortitude, personal courage and Christlikeness that emerge, and I am grateful all over again for the Scriptures that shape us – that call us to our best selves and to hope in the gospel. I've been drawn to Romans again and again just now, and leave you with it: Romans 5: 1-4.

'Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us.'

I hope that you enjoy catching glimpses of God's activity as you explore this edition of The Link.

Revd Dr Deirdre Brower Latz
Principal, Nazarene Theological College



BETH'S STORY

FROM SPIRITUAL RESTLESSNESS TO BUDDING THEOLOGIAN

If Beth White hadn't received a leaflet about the The Message Trust charity, she might have gone to study art at university. Instead, she's entering her fifth year in urban ministry, and starting her second year in the Bachelor's Degree in Practical Theology at Nazarene Theological College.

Her decisions to join an urban mission team and study theology grew out of a spiritual restlessness during her teenage years.

I was a Christian on Sundays, and I loved God, but didn't know what to do with it,

"I was raised in a Christian family. We were going to church, but just because that's what you did. I was a Christian on Sundays, and I loved God, but didn't know what to do with it," she said.

The family changed churches when Beth was 13, and she saw an entirely different side of faith: the vibrant, joyful, living kind.

"Just the way they talked about God, having a relationship with God, I'd never heard that," she recalled. "To me God was this distant thing. I didn't even know what He was. [That's] when I decided I wanted to take my faith seriously."

Moving into the neighbourhood

The more Beth knew God personally, the more she wanted to serve Him, but had no idea where to start.

The leaflet from The Message Trust, about their Eden Network, described a ministry in which people relocate to urban areas where the Church is in decline. By living in these struggling communities, the urban missionaries discover avenues to share their faith in the context of trusting relationships they develop with people in the neighbourhood.

Reading the leaflet was the first time Beth remembers being strongly aware of God asking her to do something. She dropped her plans for university and signed up for a gap year with the Eden Network. Her assignment was to work with teenagers.

At first, Beth struggled with that.

"Even as a teenager I didn't like other teenagers," she said, laughing. "I remember one night asking God to give me a passion for young people. It was the quickest God's ever answered my prayers. It felt like overnight I became heartbroken for the kids we were working with. They didn't know God or have that hope, or know what God thought about them. →

They felt worthless, and heading down the same route of generations before them.”

Beth now says she sees the neighborhood youth as “lovely.”

“They like to think and act like they’re not, but you can see below the show they’re putting on. I fell in love with the young people.”

The boy with the flowers

A special day in her ministry was when the Eden team took a group of youth to the beach. Some of the teens had never left their town, nor seen the ocean. One of the planned activities was for the teens to creatively use five pounds to bless someone in the beachside community they were visiting.

Beth’s group decided to buy fresh flowers and hand them out to people on the sidewalk.

“I had this boy who was always really grumpy,” Beth said. “He would pretend he’s not listening and that he’s really tough. I didn’t think he’d want to [give out flowers], but he loved it. He had a whole bunch of flowers to himself, and he’d go up to people and say, ‘This is to brighten your day.’ He was smiling. He came alive.”

After the trip, the young man continued to blossom. He began attending the church youth group, and took the Alpha Course, an evangelistic study for people who are interested to learn more about following Christ, or how to follow Him once they’ve made a commitment.

Questions and answers

Many youth have questions about life, God, the Bible and faith. Beth began

to think that having a better grasp of theology would help equip her to answer their questions. But the idea of enrolling in a theology course was daunting.

“When I think of theologians, I think of people with beards and glasses,” she admitted, laughing. “I didn’t think I would be clever enough.”

Her pastor had attended NTC and suggested she consider it. So, she visited an Open Day to learn more. She was delighted to find an approachable, welcoming and supportive community, giving her the courage to enroll in the fall of 2019.

“I love it. I’m so excited to go back, it makes me feel so happy.”

“It’s not what I expected. It’s much more pastoral and caring than what I expected a theological college to be like. I love it. I’m so excited to go back, it makes me feel so happy.”

“I loved every class,” she went on. “I thought my mind was getting blown. I feel my relationship with God has changed. I have a different understanding of who I used to think God was and actually who He is.”

Studying alongside others who hail from diverse walks of life has also been a highlight, “a little taste of heaven,” she said, adding with a smile, “But I hope we don’t have essays in heaven.” ❖



Thinking of going deeper in your theological journey?

NTC Loyalty Bursary

If you have recently graduated from NTC and are thinking about studying an MA with us, you may be eligible for the NTC loyalty bursary. For more details and all the terms and conditions please contact: finance@nazarene.ac.uk

www.nazarene.ac.uk



Nazarene Theological College is an approved partner of the University of Manchester



COSMOS'S STORY

CALLED TO FOLLOW IN HIS FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

When thousands of displaced refugees flooded the African city where Cosmos Mutowa pastored a local church, the direction of his life and ministry changed.

He realized that the church does not just bring people together for Sunday worship, but prepares people to live their faith in Jesus Christ among their neighbours every day of the week.

Cosmos credits his Master's Degree in Theology (2019), through Nazarene Theological College-Manchester's Compassionate Ministries Pathway, as equipping him to lead compassionate ministries for the Church of the Nazarene denomination across the continent of Africa.

Growing up a pastor's child

Born in Zimbabwe, Cosmos grew up in a pastor's home. His father was one of the Church of the Nazarene's founding pastors in the country.

Raising eight children on a pastor's salary, his parents always struggled to meet their basic needs. That tested Cosmos' faith early.

"I would question, 'If God is so loving and caring, why do we have to struggle?' My dad just taught us to trust in God and to

believe in Him. And He met our needs. We never really begged for food. We were not living well, in terms of getting all we needed, but we never lived a day without a meal, and we saw God answering our needs."

As he neared high school graduation, Cosmos envisioned going on to university, getting a good paying job and then supporting his parents financially. It didn't quite work out as he planned, however.

Called to follow in his father's footsteps

During a revival service, a teenage Cosmos recognized God's calling into pastoral ministry. But he was afraid to tell his parents.

"If it is God speaking to you, then follow Him. He will not let you down."

"I thought my daddy would be upset with me. Each parent would love their children to do well. But my parents supported me: 'If it is God speaking to you, then follow Him. He will not let you down.'"

That wisdom proved true. God expanded Cosmos's ministry over the years to include higher education. Having earned a Bachelor's Degree in Theology, and →

a Master's Degree in Religion at Africa Nazarene University in Kenya, in addition to pastoring local churches Cosmos also taught at Nazarene Bible College (NBC) in Zimbabwe, and Nazarene Theological College of Central Africa, in Malawi. In Malawi, where for two years he worked as national mission coordinator for the denomination, he simultaneously filled the role of interim Principal.

But it was during one of his local pastorates that his life and ministry took a significant turn.

“A healthy church is a compassionate church.”

‘A healthy church is a compassionate church’ During a time of political turmoil, displaced people surrounded his local church, seeking refuge, food and shelter. He led the congregation in providing hot meals, clothing and emotional and spiritual support.

“Our church became the center of compassion,” he said. “That prepared me to understand the church is not only about coming on a Sunday.... The church was being called to be out there, to be God’s hands and God’s feet every day. Sunday became a day of celebrating God, but the actual living of the life was not what was happening on Sunday. We’re only effective when we’re out there in the community.”

When he gained significant experience in compassionate outreach at the local church level, in 2008 he was asked to replicate this on a much wider scale: the Nazarene denomination in Africa asked him to take leadership of its continent-wide compassionate ministries. “We coined the term in Africa, ‘A healthy

church is a compassionate church; a compassionate church is a healthy church.’ That became our model, and drove us to see how each local church can play a significant role in meeting the needs of the community.”

Harvesting the seeds of compassion

The need for compassionate ministry in Africa is never-ending. The continent is afflicted with repeated natural disasters and health crises, political and religious turmoil.

Cosmos believes the local church has a central role in bringing healing. For instance, the Nazarene church was critical to helping Swaziland reverse the spread of HIV-AIDS through driving community education, challenging stigmas, and increasing testing.

“We helped people to say, even if you have AIDS, you are not condemned by God. God loves you,” he said. “That opened up people to testing, and even pastors disclosing deaths in their families and children who have died of AIDS.”

Cosmos is proud of how local churches across Africa are actively engaging in disaster relief and public health issues, as congregations minister to their own neighbours and communities through resources God has provided them.

“You don’t need money from America or England to serve your neighbour,” Cosmos said. “We can be our brother’s keepers in the areas where we live.”

Equipped for effective ministry

Cosmos credits his studies at NTC-Manchester with powerfully shaping his understanding of God’s compassion, and thus the church’s role in compassionate works.



“The time that I spent at NTC was really a time that deepened my faith, my understanding of God and His compassion, His care for the world and for those people on the margins of society,” Cosmos said. “NTC is different from the colleges I attended before. NTC allowed us to think outside of the box of our understanding of who God is and how He works with people.”

His thinking and reflection were sharpened through studying alongside people from a variety of denominations, he added.

“Now I can articulate why we do compassion and why we need to care for our world that God has given us, and who God wants us to be in helping heal our world.” ❖



WELCOME TO NTC

We would like to introduce you to the new members of the NTC team.



BERNADINE PORTBURY
Chaplaincy Assistant

Having recently graduated from NTC with a BA (Hons) in Theology (Practical Theology) Bernadine joins the Chaplaincy team and will be managing the pastoral care groups and morning prayers during term time.



CATH ELLIOTT
Admissions Coordinator and Administrative Assistant

Cath has worked in engineering, IT, database analysis and while on a career break undertook part time work as a teaching assistant and gardener. She worked as the Administrator for Northern Baptist College and for The Samaritans. Cath and Steve attend Didsbury Baptist Church.



FIONA TAYLOR
Learning Support Assistant

Fiona came to NTC in 2016, and completed her MA in Biblical Studies in 2018. Prior to that she had a decade's experience as a teacher and deputy head in Manchester. She has begun PhD research through NTC, but also is passionate about helping support non-traditional students to successful engagement with learning, and brings all her experience of education to those roles.



JOHN GIBSON
Maintenance

John studied music at college and then moved his career into plumbing, electrics, joinery and general maintenance. He currently lives in Stockport with his wife, Katherine and 3 children.



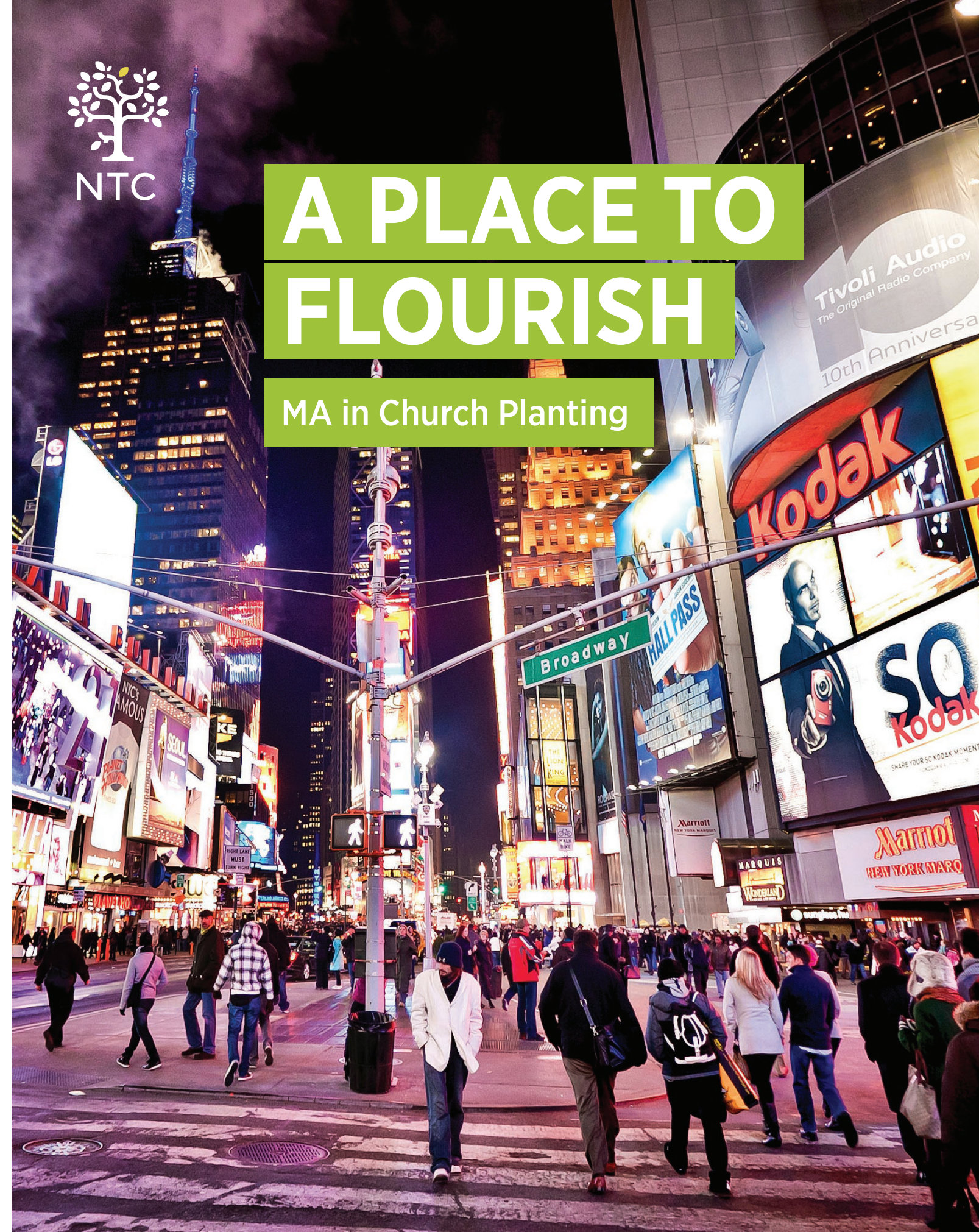
KIRSTY BURKE
Admissions Coordinator and Administrative Assistant

Kirsty is originally from Northern Ireland & moved to Manchester in 2012 to do a gap year, 8 years later she is still here! In that time she has married Tom, completed her BA (Hons) in Practical Theology & her MA in theology, all at NTC. When Kirsty is not in the Academic office, she co-pastors a local Nazarene Church in Didsbury.



A PLACE TO FLOURISH

MA in Church Planting





SHIRLEY'S STORY

CALLED TO SERVE HER LOCAL COMMUNITY

Having worked with a Glasgow organization that serves those experiencing the challenges of homelessness, Shirley Berry desired a deeper theological grasp of how to help. In 2015, she enrolled in Nazarene Theological College-Manchester's (NTC) Master's Degree in the Urban Theology pathway, and graduated in 2019.

"I wanted to have a bit more understanding of how I could speak from the Bible into this, and not just around community or experience, but have actual knowledge," Shirley said. "I also wanted to reconcile some of the experiential side of the ministry with an academic knowledge base."

A call to the community

When she was a teenager, Shirley's father gave his life to Jesus, quickly followed by her mum, and they got involved in their local church. Their conversion challenged her own prior experience with God.

"I felt called to the local community I was born into."

"I began to be challenged on how I wasn't really living the relationship [with Jesus]," she recalls. "That's when I made a commitment to follow Jesus. And from that moment, I felt called to the local

community that I was born into. I had a love for people and just really threw myself into that."

Shirley's calling to her community started by getting to know the church's neighbours. As she discovered their challenges and needs, she created a small charity to come alongside and support the families. It grew, and soon other churches wanted to become partners. The need grew, as did the charity, until the charity reached the limit of its capacity to help.

Shirley reached out to Bethany Christian Trust, a larger, non-government organization operating in the east of Scotland, with a vision to expand into the west.

"For about 70% of the families we were supporting, the core issue was a housing issue of some sort. At that point, we decided to merge with the larger charity, and that became the basis of this community support arm of the work."

Theological study fuels ministry

Throughout her faith journey, Shirley says that hospitality has held a central place in her practice of serving others and sharing community. It was something she pursued instinctively, without coming at it from a theological perspective. →

When she began studying for her MA at NTC, her dissertation looked at hospitality in relation to grace, especially the two millennium-old church practice of gathering around a table for a shared meal.

“That really has very much shaped this next part of my ministry,” Shirley said. “I can now see the potential in what I did and thought was a good thing; I can see there’s something so much more involved in salvation and in discipleship through nourishment.”

As she researched hospitality, she focused on the prolific writings of the theologian Robert Capon, especially, *The Supper of the Lamb*, and *The Parables of Grace*. Inspired by his ideas, she began hosting “Magdalene Meals,” which gathers people around a table to share food, as well as guiding them through discussion of a theological topic.

NTC itself set an example of putting into practice a “real love for all God’s people, and really drawing out potential,” she said. “Sometimes people can say that in a mission statement, but it doesn’t transfer into the actual learning. I just really felt the staff have a real intentionality to see what God sees in people, and listen and hear as well as teach. I really valued their style and their heart.”

Gaining confidence in theology

Shirley had never formally studied theology, and lacked certainty in her ability as she entered the program.

“Yet, it was at a time in my life when I had all this experience and practice, and it was the right thing to do,” she said. “It was the right level. I didn’t have the confidence, before, to pick up a theological book. The course totally blew that out of the

water. It reframed what theology is, and I reconciled that with my own relationship with God, which has been phenomenal. I just love it.”

She was attracted to the Urban Theology pathway because she wanted to know what the Bible says about ministering to people who live in cities. Her studies ignited an ongoing passion for theology.

NTC lifted my eyes, my dreaming and my possibilities...

“What the MA did for me was to open up a world of theology that had much more to say, and a global setting (beyond the local church),” she said. “It lifted my eyes, it lifted my dreaming and my possibilities from a very localized expression, and connected that with a bigger picture.”

She studied part-time, while working with Bethany Christian Trust, raising three children with her husband, and being involved in their local church. She resigned from the Trust in 2019 to focus on completing her dissertation, alongside a sense that God is leading her in a new direction of Leadership and prayer ministry within the local urban church, alongside her Chaplaincy and her Charity Foundation role with Peter Vardy Ltd.

“It’s exciting, and some of the things I learned in the MA have been really helpful in navigating that and explaining it.”

“It’s exciting to see now why God led me into this learning opportunity. It has provided the right platform to work from, in developing both roles.” ❀



To all of our Alumni, did you know you can enjoy a short course for free!

NTC Short Courses

Short courses are an inexpensive and flexible way to build towards the vocation you want or a good way to expand your personal learning and professional development.

Social Entrepreneurship:

The Innovative Leader. Starts Friday November 6, 2020

Theology and Models of Evangelism. January 25–29, 2021

Resilient Discipleship. 9–16 January, 2021

Find out more at: www.nazarene.ac.uk/alumni



ASIAN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES AT NTC



You may wonder why NTC has anything to do with 'Asian theological studies'. In fact, NTC has been serving East and Southeast Asian students over the years. Their presence alongside others has made the NTC community diverse and rich. But it was rather an ad hoc service. With the increasing presence of East and Southeast Asians in theological discourse, NTC is now taking up an opportunity to move towards an intentional invitation and engagement to explore Asian theological studies.

With the rise of global Christianity, the voices around the world or at the margins, such as Asia, Latin America and Africa, which have long been unheard or not taken seriously in theological discourse, are now being heard. Hence particular experiences of Christians around the world in their historical, political, and social-economic contexts take significant roles in theological engagement. This is where Asian theologies find their place alongside Black, Latino, Palestinian, and postcolonial theologies, to name a few. So, 'What are Asian theologies?' 'What makes Asian theologies distinctively Asian?' Or we may rephrase these questions: What are some particular experiences of Asian people that impact on their theological reflection?

In any quest of Asian theologies, one should acknowledge its geopolitical vastness. It ranges from West Asia (Middle East) to South/Southwest Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka), to East Asia (China, Japan, Korea), to Southeast Asia (Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar). Its cultural-religious diversity, and the social-economic and historical-political complexity of Asia are equally vast. However, despite this complexity, there

are several common contextual issues relevant to Asian theological studies.

First, Asia has long been a place with scriptures of other major religions of the world (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam), including highly developed philosophical teachings (Confucianism, Taoism) and a deep cultural heritage. Importantly, Christianity was born on Asian soil. Yet Christianity is a foreign religion which steps onto a soil where other ancient religious thoughts and teachings have been firmly established. Christianity is both ancient and new, depending on where in Asia we are located. Inter-religious dialogues find their long history in Asia. Second, Asia is a rapidly growing economic power. But social-economic poverty is still a day-to-day reality for many who live in Asia. Industrialisation, globalisation and digital communications further widen the economic disparity. Third, colonization by both Western and Asian imperial powers is a shared past and the present experience in many Asian countries. Political and religious oppression against Christians is a deeply felt reality in daily lives for many in Asia.

Asian diaspora communities (or hyphenated Asians) are perceived as a 'model minority' and 'perpetual foreigners'.

Last but not least, globalization brings far more diversity to both postmodern Asia and Asian diaspora communities around the world. Asian Christians whether at home or away live at the crossroads of hybrid cultures. It is not surprising that many Asian Christians, particularly those living outside of Asia, resonate with the story of Ruth who is an 'exemplary', but forever 'Moabite' (thus →

foreign), woman. The admonition of 1 Peter to Christians who are aliens and immigrants is perhaps the most heartfelt teaching to Asian diaspora communities: 'Conduct yourselves honourably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honourable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge' (1 Peter 2:11-12). Asian diaspora communities (or hyphenated Asians) are perceived as a 'model minority' and 'perpetual foreigners'. The complexity of Asian-ness and Christian identity with experiences of displacement, difference, and alienation profoundly shapes Asian theological discourses. Yet this is not necessarily a distinctively Asian experience, but a shared one by many who find themselves 'out of place' or 'neither here nor there' or 'neither black nor white'. Hence Asian theological discourses align with and invite others to explore the possibilities of discovering full humanity in Christ together.

The goal of Asian theological studies is not reacting against European theologies, but contributing to the global theological discourse.

Given these needs and the issues arising from them, how can Asian theologies be explored particularly at a place like NTC, a Wesleyan holiness confessional college, located in Manchester, UK? NTC has been welcoming students from different parts of Asia alongside others. It has always been invitational to the voices often less heard while rooted in a European context. The goal of Asian theological studies is not reacting against European theologies, but contributing to the global theological discourse.

The task is how to utilize theological practices with our Asian-ness to enrich

the global community. The formation of Christian identity in the process of doing Asian theologies is important. The question is not 'How can an Asian claim her true Christian identity without losing the other?' but 'How can Christian identity make her truly Asian and vice versa?' In other words, can we sing the Lord's song together with others around the world, bringing our own Asian voices to the music?

Toward this goal, I am dreaming of creating a space for those who live their lives 'with and through differences' and often find themselves 'out of place', neither here nor there, neither black nor white, to struggle with the challenges and unanswered theological questions alongside one another. I envision a place at NTC where we celebrate the richness of diversity, complexity, hybridity and humanity in Christ and lament the painful living experiences of homelessness, displacement, and otherness in our realities. The voices of Asia in theological discourse alongside others will enrich and recover our colourful humanity in the image of the Triune God. ✿

Mi Ja Wi BA, MDiv, MA, PhD

Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Global Mission.
Nazarene Theological College, Manchester



Thinking of what next?

MA in Theology

The MA in Theology and the parallel Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate in Theology have nine pathways to choose from.

The various pathways serve to resource missions and ministry, support continuing professional development and act as an excellent platform for further research. In addition, full-time and flexible part-time routes make study accessible for everyone – wherever you are in the world!

Find out more at: www.nazarene.ac.uk



Nazarene Theological College
is an approved partner of the
University of Manchester



JACOB'S STORY

EQUIPPED FOR RELATIONAL MISSION

Serving as a missionary in Asia, Jacob Lett realised that Asian people didn't need foreign missionaries to evangelise, disciple them and plant churches as much as they needed high quality, contextualised theological education.

That recognition propelled Jacob on a journey to complete his PhD in theology through Nazarene Theological College-Manchester (NTC), and to join the Faculty in the Theology Department at MidAmerica Nazarene University (MNU) in Olathe, Kansas, USA.

A journey in missions

Jacob began to follow Jesus while still a teenager. He'd been struggling with depression, so he bought a Bible and began reading it. He prayed that if God would be real in his life, he would obey God in everything.

"I found that it did work, so I stuck with it."

Thanks to a stranger's invitation to attend a local church's youth group, he joined a faith community that helped him grow as a young disciple of Christ. There, he sensed God calling him to missions. So, after graduating high school he enrolled at MNU to pursue a degree in Missions and Intercultural Studies.

Jacob met Whitney at MNU, and they began dating. She shared his call to international ministry. They both went to Asia as study abroad students, where they became engaged. Their hearts beat together for Asia, and so after graduation and their wedding, they returned to teach English. They lived and worked there for several years. But over time, they discerned a change in the shape of their mission calling.

They were much better about reaching their own people," he said. "We felt like we got in the way of that."

"The [people there] were much better about reaching their own people," he said. "We felt like we got in the way of that."

More than foreign missionaries, Jacob observed that the people of Asia need quality, contextualized theological education. Personally, he also was hungry to wrestle with his faith in a deeper way, and to be better equipped to support others with questions and doubts in their faith. While still in Asia, Jacob learned that NTC offered Master's degrees to distance learners. So he completed a Master's in Theology (2013) from Asia, then began working on his PhD through NTC. →



A new expression of mission

When God led them to return to the United States, the couple landed back in Olathe where Jacob was asked to fill in for an adjunct faculty member taking a year off from the Theology Department at MNU. Eventually, that expanded to a full-time faculty position. He completed his PhD while teaching full time, and graduated from NTC in 2019.

“We never imagined ourselves working at a Christian university and living in the Midwest,” Jacob said. “So we’re still trying to figure out how all the pieces fit.”

In surprising ways, he can see his heart for missions being fulfilled through journeying alongside students struggling with their faith, as well as continuing to deliver

theological education to believers in Asia through video conferencing technology. Recently, he met with a house group in Singapore to teach a two-week doctrine series over Zoom.

Equipped for relational mission

Studying for his doctorate at NTC helped Jacob marry the scholarly discipline of theology with the personal side of being a disciple of Christ.

“For most of my life, I wasn’t sure how to integrate the academic and spiritual facets of my personality. Now, it’s difficult for me to distinguish what is me being a scholar and what is my personal spirituality. The cognitive and the contemplative are mutually involved.”

Jacob’s Master’s dissertation focused on the work of Jürgen Moltmann in the Lutheran tradition; his PhD explored the writings of Hans Urs von Balthasar, a 20th century Jesuit Roman Catholic theologian from Switzerland. His dissertation asks what it means to act for justice and mercy on behalf of other human beings, deeper than on a political level.

Is there some type of place where our places are shared—your place and my place—and we act on one another’s behalf?”

“Is there some type of place where our places are shared—your place and my place—and we act on one another’s behalf?” he said. “I’m using the Catholic and Orthodox traditions to illuminate what that means. They have a theology of ‘the communion of saints’, a mystical idea that shows how we are all connected to one another. Protestants often limit action for others to political action. This is expressed in our forensic understanding of what Christ did for us. In my research, I explored other ways of explaining Christ’s action for us and human action for others.”

Studying theologians from outside the American evangelical tradition has strengthened and deepened Jacob’s personal faith. It also positions him to mentor the college students and other young people he meets who don’t feel they fit in the evangelical tradition, but aren’t familiar with other expressions of Christianity.

“We have a lot Christians on campus who are leaving the church due to frustrations with evangelicalism,” he said. “My studies and international work opened up a world of the Christian faith that is unknown in

the Midwest, and allows me to introduce students to different expressions of the Christian faith that resonates with them.”

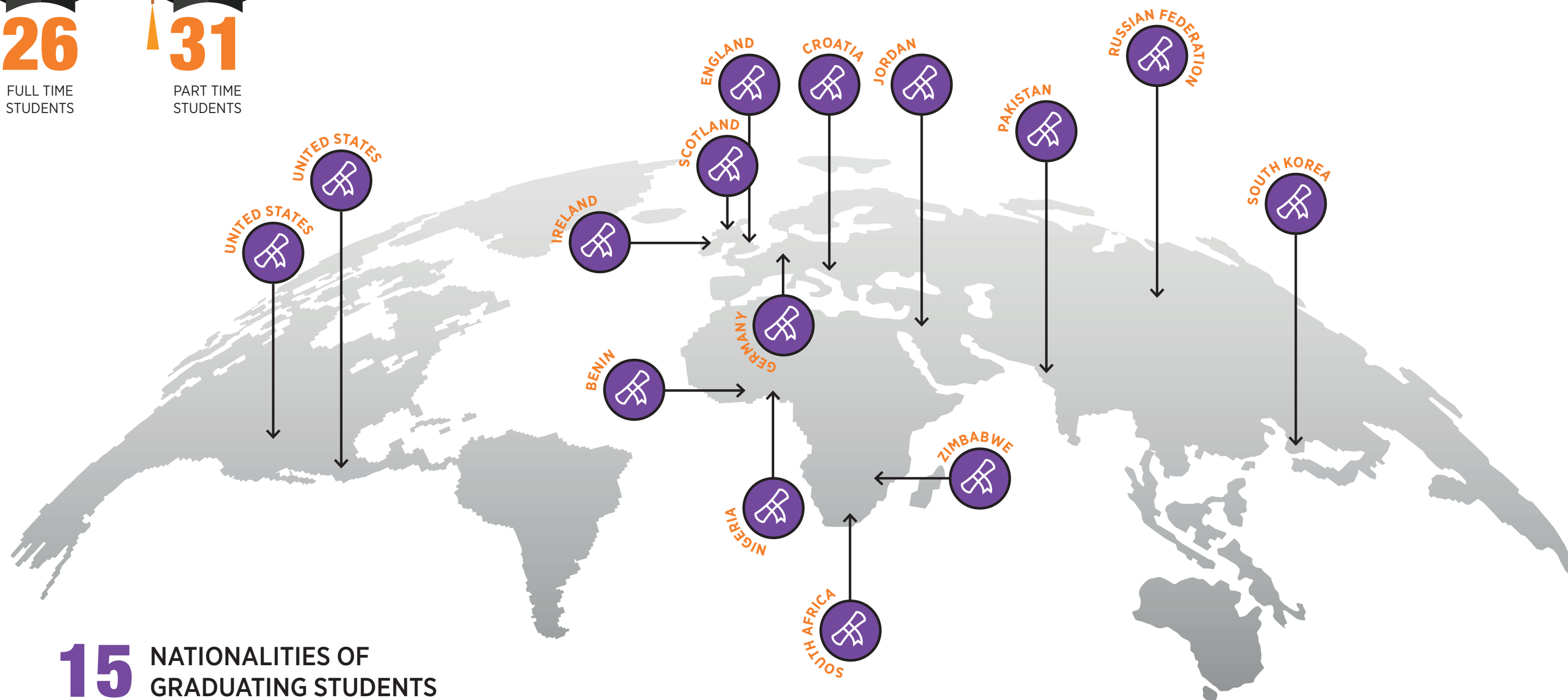
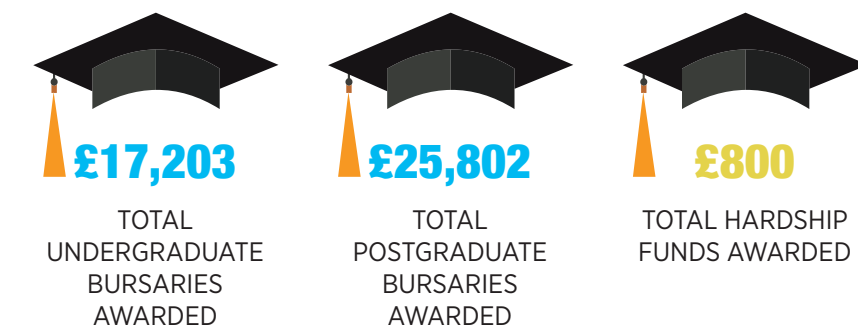
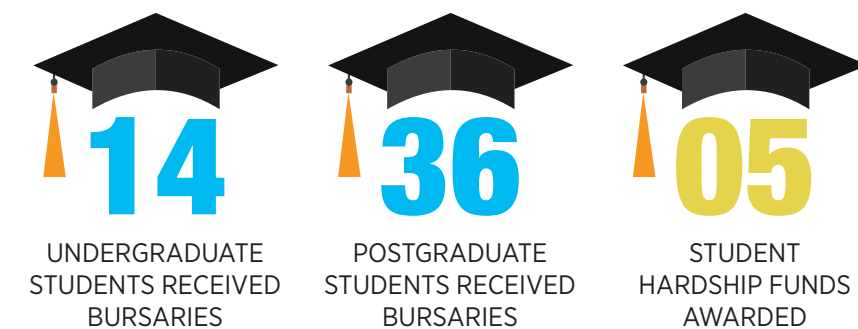
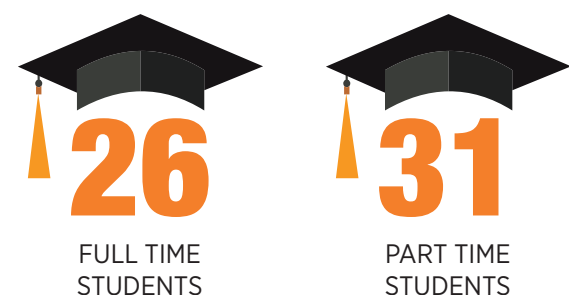
It’s the academic journey alongside other NTC students with whom he developed a close and supportive camaraderie over eight summers of PhD gatherings that made his studies especially meaningful. The cohort included scholars from various countries in Africa, as well as from Lebanon, Korea, Canada, and the United States.

“We started at the same time, and are slowly completing around the same time,” he said. “That’s a priceless gift. I feel much more connected with the international church through my relationship with NTC students.”

NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE 2019-20 IN NUMBERS



100%





DIEUDONNE'S STORY

EVANGELISING THROUGH JUSTICE

As he studies an MA in Theology and Humanitarian Development at Nazarene Theological College, Manchester (NTC), Dieudonne Nzayi's heart and mind are returning to his home and people in the Congo, a war-torn nation in East Central Africa.

Living in Sheffield with his wife, Chantal Nyankumi, and their two sons Elohim and Elijah, Dieudonne is training and leading Congolese pastors from Eastern Congo and is an associate minister in the New Testament Church of God in Sheffield. He is also developing a project he calls One

Family, One Bible, with the objective of bringing Bibles to every family in eastern Congo, many of whom have lost everything, including their Bibles, in the civil war.

He enrolled at NTC last year, where he is gaining a deeper understanding of theology and how it breathes into a pastor's leadership in serving the marginalized, and bringing biblical justice to their communities and world.

Orphaned and alone

Born in South Kivu, in Minembwe, Congo, Dieudonne was the oldest of six brothers and one sister.

"From my first year to 25 years of age, I'd never lived in houses where there is electricity," he recalls. "In the place where I was born, I never saw a hospital. In the village we have one syringe, and everyone borrowed it. There weren't health utilities and transport. I was walking two hours to go to school every day."

Lack of hospitals and medical infrastructure was why his parents both died a short time apart. First, his father fell severely ill, dying within a week. Later, his mother died suddenly. They suspect it was a heart attack. But without a doctor's examination and diagnosis, the children never learned exactly why their parents died.

A teenage Dieudonne was left to raise his younger siblings. Their extended family in the village struggled to feed and clothe their own families, so there was no one to take in the orphaned children.

Juggling school with raising siblings

While he was in high school, his sister fell ill. Having learned a devastating lesson from losing parents to lack of medical

care, he traveled with her 185 kilometers to a hospital where they both stayed for three months. His final exams were scheduled for a Tuesday. His sister died the Sunday before.

"I didn't get time to study during those three months. When I was preparing to take the exams, I took three days of fasting, and said, 'God, I didn't get time to study. I'm an orphan, taking care of my brothers and sister. I need to see your support.' At that time I swore to God I will work for Him if He helped me."

"To me, I can say it was a miracle from God to support me..."

Out of the 45 students who sat for the exam, Dieudonne scored third highest. "To me, I can say it was a miracle from God to support me in that hard time."

But there were even harder times to come.

Fleeing civil war

Minembwe is near the border of Burundi and Rwanda. In 1994, when the Rwandan genocide broke out, those who had committed the genocide fled justice into eastern Congo – where Dieudonne's family lived. The international criminals brought their civil war with them, igniting war in eastern Congo.

In 1995, among many others, Dieudonne and his siblings were forced to flee the widespread violence into Rwanda, which was then rebuilding and establishing peace.

In Rwanda, Dieudonne remembered his promise to serve God, and enrolled at Adventist University of Central Africa (UAAC) for his bachelor's degree. He was accepted, but was the only one of 18 →

students who did not have any financial support. He took jobs at the university, such as working in the garden and cleaning the school. The school credited his salary to his tuition.

Dieudonne recalls how he didn't know much about cleaning, since he didn't have running water in his home village. The first time he was asked to clean the toilet, he didn't know what to do. His village didn't have water in toilets. When the principal asked him to mop the classroom floors, he simply poured water all over the floor, and then realized he didn't know how to remove the water. When the principal arrived and asked why the floor was still covered with water just as students were about to arrive for class, Dieudonne feared he would lose his job and entire financial support.

The university was patient with him. He completed his four years of education, despite spending most of his time working, with little time left to study, eat, or even have friendships.

“Let me move forward. God will take care of me”

“I was working all day and didn't have time to sit and read my books. But because the calling is strong in me, I said, ‘Let me move forward. God will take care of me,’” Dieudonne said. “I did the four years with support from heaven, because God, He is able to do everything if we trust in God. It's not about wealth. It's about building my personality in faith, to know who I am, to know who God is, and to know why I am trusting in Him.”

Moving to England for ministry

Sensing a call to international evangelism, Dieudonne sold everything and flew to

England in September 2011 to continue his studies in Newbold College of Higher Education, near London. He reasoned that if he could eventually receive a British passport, he would be able to move freely around the world in ministry.

In November 2011 he claimed asylum in England, but his claim was denied. On July 2012 he was detained, then held at three different immigration removal centers. On November 2012, the administrative court ordered his release. “I said ... ‘I have to fight, because I prayed to come to this country.’”

He went to the High Court, which ruled in his favor. He was released, allowed to legally remain in the country, and given a permit to work.

First he settled in Oxford, joining the community of Congolese immigrants. Then he relocated to Sheffield to become an associate minister at a New Testament Church of God. Having found his place with the expatriate Congolese community, Dieudonne is part of a leadership team providing training and coordination for 20 Congolese ministers in England.

While visiting a friend in Manchester, he met Chantal, who is a Methodist pastor's daughter from Congo. She had likewise settled in England after spending years in a Burundi refugee camp. They became friends and communicated regularly, quickly agreeing to marry. They now have two sons. Dieudonne dreamed of finishing his studies in England. So he evaluated various theology schools, deciding on Nazarene Theological College. In December 2019 he enrolled in the Master's Degree in Theology. His dissertation is entitled “Can the Church Provide Shalom for Asylum Seekers in the UK?”

Evangelizing through justice

“When I went to NTC, I was just a minister. But now I'm an activist,” he said, explaining how his studies are already shaping him. “I thought evangelism is accepting sin and receiving Jesus, but I didn't think about helping the community, supporting people, social justice, social injustice. I found out that, most of the time, Jesus was helping poor people; the voice of voiceless. [Now], I see injustice and justice is part of evangelism.”

“I'm not saying justice as in a court, like someone who studies laws, or someone who is a judge. But I'm saying justice according to the word of God. In the Bible there is salvation and justice; not justice as in punishing someone, but justice that brings hope and brings someone to the cross and creates faith in someone. Like the good Samaritan: what he did is justice, when he said I'm going to pay everything. I think the one who had been attacked now saw the love of God in that man.”

It is this urgency for justice that has compelled Dieudonne's heart and thoughts to return to his home village and the war-torn region of Eastern Congo. Without even the benefit of bicycles, the people must walk everywhere. In the absence of medical infrastructure, members of the village still conduct surgery on each other with household knives and without anesthesia. People still share one syringe among an entire village. Amid the civil war, women are raped. There are too few schools, too many unpaved roads, and no electricity. Many families have lost everything, including their Bibles. And it is in God, first, where Dieudonne has found his own hope and strength, a hope and strength that he wants for his people to experience.



One Family, One Bible.

“We've got like 160,000 people without Bibles, and I'm trying to raise money to see if we can get money to buy the Bibles. They are meeting for worship without any Bibles.”

Dieudonne is praying for people to join his cause and is searching for partner organizations who will share his vision and bring resources to the table. He is planning a series of ministry visits to eastern Congo to serve his people in whatever ways he can.

“NTC opened my mind and now I can see a big picture of evangelism,” he said. “And my vision is, when I finish my studies, I will try to train my fellow pastors from Congo about this course.”

Dieudonne plans to be an ambassador for NTC and asks everyone to consider enrolling to study theology. ❖



NTC OPEN EVENINGS

DISCOVER YOUR POTENTIAL



ALL OVER THE WORLD PEOPLE ARE ASKING BIG QUESTIONS ABOUT LIFE, FAITH AND THE WORLD.

The challenges and adjustments of life have reminded us all of the fragility of life but raised deeper questions about its meaning and purpose.

Saint Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109) defined the pursuit of theology as faith seeking understanding. The meaning of life, and its rootedness in God, is a life journey to be explored with other travelling companions. NTC is a community of faith that explores life and faith together through rigorous thinking, spiritual formation and practical action. Want to discover more? We invite you to join our online open evenings.

Undergraduate Open Evening Q&A (videoconference)

Tuesday 3 November, 8:00pm – 9:00pm

Postgraduate Open Evening Q&A (videoconference)

Wednesday 4 November, 8:00pm – 9:00pm

REGISTER YOUR PLACE AT
www.nazarene.ac.uk
AND DISCOVER YOUR POTENTIAL



The year 2020 has brought unprecedented change. It started with fires in Australia that devastated thousands of homes and animals. Then there came the pandemic which has cost hundreds of thousands of lives and caused significant impact on economies across the world. Within the period of the pandemic came the unfortunate killing of a black man by police officers in the USA. This sparked demonstrations that swept across the globe.

The year has not come to an end and yet feels as if there have been several years rolled into one. One question that emerges is 'What is God's purpose in these times?' While the Bible has a lot to say on all these challenges, this discussion isolates the case of race relations.

One cannot read the New Testament without encountering the question of relations between people of different classes, races and nationalities. In two passages, Jesus speaks into the tense relations between Jews and Samaritans. The one occasion was when he met the woman at the well. The result was the whole town of Sychar in Samaria coming to believe in Jesus. In the parable popularly known as the 'Good Samaritan,' Jesus extends the concept of neighbourhood to include both Jews and Gentiles. In this parable, Jesus further indicates kindness can come from those we may consider too different from us.

The letter to Romans, hailed as the epitome of Paul's theology, could also be seen as dealing with relations between Jew and Gentile. Romans discusses the failure of humanity that had turned away from God. All had sinned. It mentions God's free gift of eternal life and discusses the new life in the Spirit and how that there is no

condemnation to those who are in Christ. It then applies this, among other things, to Jews and Gentiles. Scholars generally think the book may have been written to address a rift that occurred in the church at Rome between Jew and Gentile.

The letter to the Ephesians is addressed to a predominantly Gentile community at Ephesus. In the first twelve verses of chapter 1 Paul describes how God chose the Jews before the foundation of the world. This he did in Christ before the foundation of the earth. God's purpose was that all things would come under the headship of Christ. Then in Ephesians 1:13 Paul says the Gentiles were included in God's predestination of Israel. Ephesians 2 identifies that now there is one new man in Christ out of two – Jews and Gentiles. In Ephesians 3:10 the church, in its unity in diversity, displays the wisdom of God to the heavenly realms. Then Paul applies these truths to everyday living. The book addresses relationships between races in light of God's purposes. The same can be said of the letter to the Galatians, although in this letter Paul addresses himself to Gentiles. He makes clear to them that if they try to observe Jewish circumcision, they will lose the acceptance they have received in Christ.

What does this mean? First, God's purpose is for nations, races and classes to exist side by side as one humanity. This new humanity is in Christ. Second, working towards racial reconciliation fits into God's purpose. Third, working to address differences between races and classes brings about the growth of the church. The current climate of racial tension provides the church an opportunity to demonstrate the purpose of God and grow exponentially. ❖



RESILIENCE: ANOTHER WORD FOR STEADFAST LOVE?

REVD DR DEIRDRE BROWER LATZ

I'm writing on a day when I've been thinking about the new vocabulary of our lives. Lockdown, self-isolation, social distancing, quarantine, track and trace, Covid-19, furlough (missionaries were used to that one!), bubbles. In the UK (and I suspect elsewhere) we have acquired a whole new language, and come to face new realities.

In fact, there are precedents for this! We Christians should have a long memory, to know the stories of crying out to God from the depths. The Psalms invoke God's praise and majesty and then cry out for a deepening presence in times of trouble, suffering and trial.

We remember in the unfolding history of our Church the tender mercy of care offered to the suffering during the ravages of disease and famines. We have a deep and lingering memory of hospitality offered to the sick by monasteries during the black death: and the knock-on effect of monks strangely surviving against the odds, going on to offer more mercy to people in need. We know that in recent history our brothers and sisters on the continent of Africa have grappled with Ebola, and found ways of being faithful to God and embedding compassionate actions in communities. I'm inspired by the Scripture and traditions that

shape us! We know that Christians have worshipped and prayed their way through plagues, famines and persecution and found ways of being present with each other and before God. The people of God have discovered that in times of national disaster, extreme poverty, anxiety in the atmosphere, and fear of the unknown future, that turning to God enables resilience to be built, enacted and witnessed.

Interestingly, in and around us, the initial flush of struggle created a deeper sense of community for everyone: Christians and non-Christians alike. I found myself moved by the stories of people rising up to care, create support networks, offering themselves to others, sharing life, goods, time, energy and effort. People from all faiths and none got quickly involved in supporting their neighbours. I was compelled by stories on Twitter and Facebook of the love lavished on others. Feeding, visiting, caring, finding medicine... connections were created.

Even in the church people drew closer: in one conversation a leader told me that for the isolated people in his church community, they were worried about after lockdown, because they'd never been less isolated as disabled and elderly people. They felt like they mattered now and were →

equals! Ouch. That really struck me. Who are we as a church?

Then, recently, news has started to creep in about 'fatigue'. I heard a report that said several months in, people are a bit tired of their neighbours now! The new normal has reverted towards the 'busy' end of the spectrum. As kids are back at school, people are back at work, others are working harder than ever from home, or are looking for work having lost their jobs, as stresses are building, as rules come and go, there's a waning of community and a bit more drawing in. And it struck me that our time is now.

We are those whose roots are deep, whose habits of love are created over decades and will unfold in ongoing ways.

The church and her people, we, are called to have a resilient love. Our love for neighbours isn't merely an impulse of kindness that reflects the image of God in our creation in a moment of acute need, instead our lives are Christ's forever. It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us forever (Galatians 2: 20). We are those whose roots are deep, whose habits of love are created over decades and will unfold in ongoing ways.

Because God's love (as a song says) doesn't run out, nor does ours. As people hunker down for winter, fend for themselves, seek ways of survival, we are those who go beyond survival, we live in love still. We know that this moment, these times we're in, cannot separate us from the source of love (Romans 8:35-39) and so we love from this source of amazing grace – and our love doesn't end. We don't get tired of feeding hungry folk, or of petitioning leaders for the riches to be shared with the poorest. We don't get

tired of clothing the naked, or of finding ways that they can never be naked again. We don't get tired of being merciful to widows, orphans, refugees, because that's our call, our heart, and our worship. How are we not just responsive in the short-term to acute need? How are we steadfast in love, reflecting God whose 'steadfast love endures forever' (Psalm 118: 1-29), whose 'steadfast love never ceases' (Lamentations 3: 22-23). How can our love endure (Hebrews 13:1-3)? We endure because we receive enduring love. That's why we sing songs about it, and pray together – not so we feel good for an hour and a half of our zoom/online/YouTube services, but so that we can be reminded of our story, recalled to who we are.

Our lives have changed now – there's no going back from the after effects of a virus (an explosion, a fire); no 'do over' of whatever in our character came to the fore; no turning back to a vocabulary without our new words; no world without increased challenges because of heightened grief, suffering, economic woes and hunger as more present than before.

And so, all the more, we need to remember how our steadfastness over the long-haul, our love over time, our mercy unfolding as new every day, is going to be called on. Our lives are mirroring the grace we have received, the steadfast love poured upon us, received by us, birthed in us, so that we might live in this grace. At this time, forged in prayer, casting our anxieties on God we also are re-committing ourselves to love in enduring ways – written on our hearts, faithful to God, who is love. (Proverbs 3:3) To me, that's resilience: Steadfast love birthed in us, and then from us – touching the world for Christ. ❀



The 2020 Didsbury Lectures

Moving beyond the Empire of Illusion: What do we do about the problem of evil?

Presented by: Professor John Swinton

Date October 26th – October 29th 2020, 19:30–20:30

The lectures will be delivered through videoconference and live streamed through the NTC Facebook page.

Register at: www.nazarene.ac.uk



A tradition of excellence

PhD Research with NTC

Specialisms include: Church History, Wesley Studies/Wesleyan Tradition, Christian Theology, Old Testament Studies/Second Temple/Inter-Testamental Studies, New Testament Studies and Biblical Theology, Practical Theology, Missiology.

Find out more at: www.nazarene.ac.uk