



from Garth...



The concert and conversation called 'Against the Grain' on the 17th of December was a very encouraging evening for Gill and myself. I'm leaving Amos at the end of the year, but Amos is deep-rooted in us - so we won't be far away! Thanks for all the very kind, encouraging and

humorous comments, we thoroughly enjoyed it.

Not the "final concert"

One good friend phoned me the night before and said, "I'm coming to your final concert." Whereas actually since giving up as the Director of Amos I've been working part time for Amos and the other half with the [Garth Hewitt Foundation](#), so hopefully it will not be the final concert - I already have a few booked, Covid permitting. We will do less touring, but I will stay working with [GHF](#) doing the creative work of songwriting, recording, books, prayers, and of course newsletters.

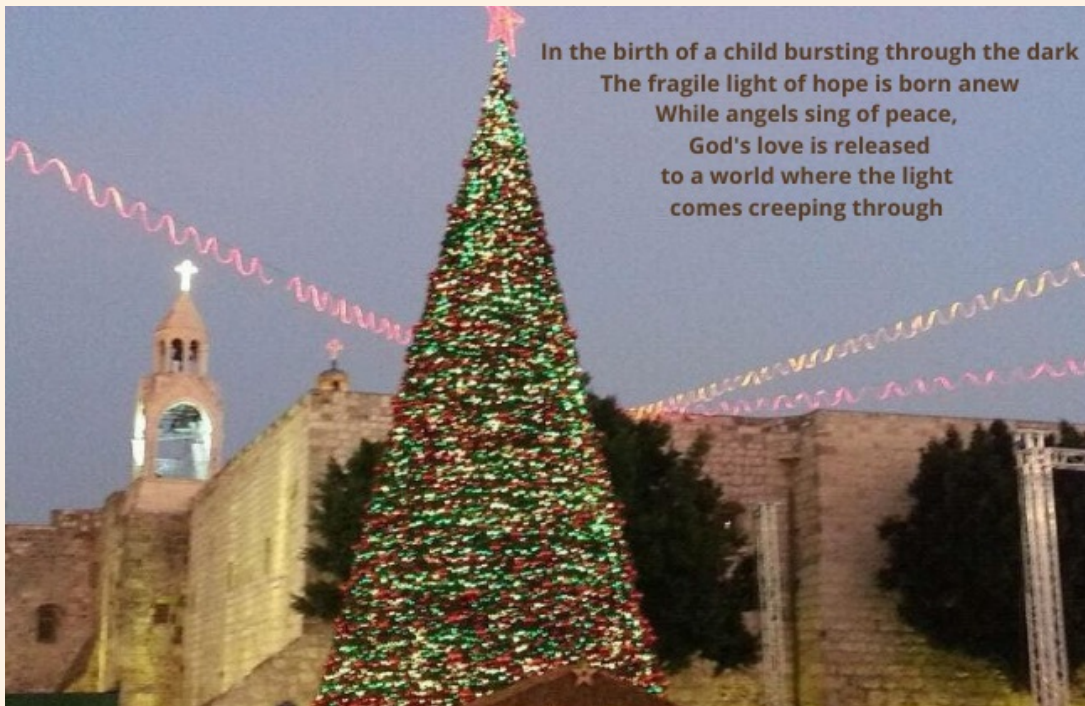
I'm very glad to say that Isobel will be supporting me in that, so do keep in touch.

You can read more about the Garth Hewitt Foundation and what it does [here](#), and if you would like to support Garth's continuing ministry you can donate by using the '[Support the GHF](#)' button there or on any page of his website, or contact us on info@garthhewitt.org

If you missed Garth's farewell Christmas concert given by Amos Trust on Thursday 17th December, you can watch it [on Vimeo here](#)

Pause before Christmas

Having had a very enjoyable and moving Advent, including the heartwarming farewell from Amos Trust, it's time to pause before Christmas.



In the birth of a child bursting through the dark
The fragile light of hope is born anew
While angels sing of peace,
God's love is released
to a world where the light
comes creeping through

I believe in the way of peace
I believe in the way of Jesus
And in the values God has shown us
Born anew in the child of Christmas
Oh I believe in the child of Christmas

This is a strange and difficult year in many ways for families but I've been encouraged by some words from Palestinian friends - even some words from forgotten Gaza. I think they help us to draw on the strength of the encouraging message of Christmas - that **despite no room in the inn, despite occupation, the words of Christmas hope break through, reminding us that a peacemaker was born - and that brings faith and hope**; and the words of our friends remind us to pray for a turning point for peace and justice.

I'm very conscious that the people of Bethlehem are finding this one of the most difficult times for so many years because they have no pilgrims. So I am including a

prayer at the end of the newsletter that reminds us not to be silent about Bethlehem, Gaza and the community of the Holy Land.

Here is a [link to a YouTube version](#) of the song I wrote about eight years ago called *They've Cancelled Christmas in Bethlehem* - this version with the photos is still as relevant, with the prayer for the wall to fall.

Of course at the point I wrote this song I had never dreamt of the impact of a pandemic, so as we pray for the end of occupation let's also pray about the impact of Covid in the Holy Land as well as in our own communities.

Christmas words from Bishop Riah in Nazareth

In response to the lyrics in the image above, Bishop Riah Abu El-Assal, a longtime friend and the Bishop who made me a Canon of St George's Anglican Cathedral - sent the following thoughts which I share with you all -

"I too believe in what you believe, and a little more:

I believe that peace is the way

I believe that Jesus is the way

And I believe in the Child of Christmas,

Who was born not only in Bethlehem,

But also in you, your family, and in me and my family

Therefore we are entitled to celebrate with joy

HAVE A MOST BLESSED AND GLORIOUS ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS.

And I pray that 2021 will be the year of the turning point for good, for justice, for peace, for reconciliation and for life with dignity for all created in God's image, among them the Palestinians."

Prayer - Here God is at Home

A prayer I wrote for the Sabeel-Kairos Advent Service held on Zoom last Saturday afternoon

O God, Advent reminds us we should be like candles shining for justice

We should be the community that refuses to be silent about the Palestinians of Bethlehem

Of Gaza, of the West Bank, of Israel, and refugee camps across the Middle East

Because the story of Bethlehem at Christmastime reveals something special

It reveals that you are the God with such a precious love for humanity

So we must cherish human rights

You are the God of humility made visible in the ordinary person

In the everyday ordinariness of life

You are the God of the forgotten and the insignificant

And therefore there is hope for all as we too are shown how to live

And you are the God of Bethlehem today

You would chose it again

Precisely because the world thinks it is insignificant

And its people of no value

So the angels would sing again

To say “Here God is at home”

And the wise would be surprised again

Saying “Here God is at home”

And shepherds and carpenters making olive wood gifts

And tour guides and drivers of coaches for pilgrims

In a year when there are no pilgrims

And innkeepers and all the community

Women, children and men

Crushed, humiliated, invaded and imprisoned

Under occupation and under lockdown

Can stand up tall with confidence and proclaim

“Here God is at home”

Because you’ve shown your character in Bethlehem

You have affirmed humanity in Bethlehem

And still do today

And that is the message of Christmas

Bethlehem is not forgotten

Palestine is not forgotten

Here God is at home

As we take our stand of solidarity with the Palestinian community

May we never be silent

May our churches never be silent

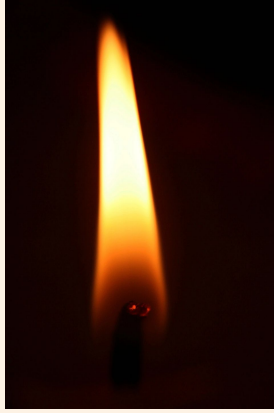
Then we will find God is at home

Justice is at home

And peace is at home

We have found the true message of Christmas

A message from Bethlehem, from Pastor Mitri Raheb



Click the image for Light a Candle in the Darkness

In the first newsletter I sent out during lockdown I included [this link](#) to the Advent version of Light a Candle in the Darkness, and we start it with words of Lutheran Pastor, theologian, and author Mitri Raheb. Now as we pause before this Christmas so affected by Covid, it seems a good time to think about this again.

A prayer for healing and hope from Gaza

I received the following message from Gaza, from Constantine Dabbagh, former Executive Director of the Near East Council of Churches in Gaza - he puts out a powerful prayer for peace for our fragile world:

**"Despite the humanitarian crises resulting from the Israeli occupation over the besieged Gaza Strip,
Coupled with the intrusion of the unwelcome Covid-19 which severely undermines health services already suffering from extreme shortages,
It is important to keep our faith and hope alive by connecting with our friends and supporters during the time of Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace.
We pray that peace may flow into our fragile world bringing healing and hope.**

I wish you all a blessed Merry Christmas and healthy, very happy and peaceful New Year."



Wishing you a very Happy Christmas

Please note that Garth's email address is no longer garth@amostrust, you can contact him on garth@garthhewitt.org, and Isobel on isobel@garthhewitt.org

If you would like to add your own message to mark the end of Garth's time with Amos Trust, Amos have created a book of messages for him which you can access on [this link](#). This will be available for another week, and will be closed on 31st December

Garth's newsletters, videos and meditational film clips are available free of advertising and bring no revenue to Garth or The Garth Hewitt Foundation. You can support Garth in his continuing creative ministry via the "Support the GHF" button on Garth's website [here \(top right\)](#) and by buying his books or CDs available on his website here - www.garthhewitt.org



©2020 Garth Hewitt Foundation | 186 Hykeham Road, Lincoln, LN6 8AP

[Web Version](#)

[Preferences](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

