



from Garth...

The tour so far...

As some of you will know, the **Against the Grain tour** has got off to a very good start. Three great days in Scotland, then three excellent days in the Midlands, and just recently a very warm evening at Chelmsford URC church.

Here Gill and I are with Salma Yacoob, Politician and Chair of Birmingham Stop the War Coalition, and Dr Waqar Azmi, Chair of Remembering Srebrenica - who came along to the Lichfield gig.



Now the tour is on hold for a few weeks as Gill and I are heading off to Nicaragua for the 45th Anniversary of Amos Trust's long time partner in Nicaragua, **CEPAD. CEPAD is a council of churches relief and development agency. I can remember singing at their 25th Anniversary, so it's very special to be going back to do concerts and even a sermon or two.**

Soon after that it's across to Palestine for events relating to the hundred years since the Balfour Declaration on November 2nd ([see my last newsletter here for more on that](#)). On the 2nd we will be linking up with the long-time walkers of **Amos Trust's Just Walk to Jerusalem** group, at 11am doing an event at Banksy's Walled Off Hotel, by the wall in Bethlehem, where he has an exhibit about Balfour, and then doing a service at St George's Cathedral Jerusalem at 5pm - a Balfour liturgy taken by myself and the Dean, Hosam Naoum - which I told you about in the last newsletter. And again, Chris Rose will be bringing the **Amos walkers**, and we are going to be joined by others including a church group from Canada.



St George's Anglican Cathedral, Jerusalem

Last time I wrote, I encouraged you to do something in your church around the 2nd of November – perhaps Sunday the 5th. You could use the Balfour liturgy that I have produced – **available for download [here](#)** and do read a section from the Christians' call as well... they long for us to speak up on this issue.

St Botolph's Without Aldgate



In November the concerts start again, mostly Against the Grain, until we creep closer to Christmas - but there is one event I particularly want to mention, on the **29th of November**. I'm doing a charity concert for the church that Gill and I attend, **St Botolph's Aldgate** - a beautiful church that stands between the City and the East End. We have been made very welcome at St Botolph's and find it to be a warm and very interesting community. They have a variety of areas of ministry but regular lunchtime concerts is one aspect of what they do. And they need to raise funds for a new piano for those, as I gather the current piano is losing legs!

We have various musicians in the church including Charlie Knowles who has a country band called **The Wild East**, and they will be performing. Also our Music Director Matthew Dunn will be taking part on piano at various points in the evening, and I will be joined by two or three members of the band that have been with me the last few years - Paul McDowell on accordion,

Pete Banks from After the Fire on backing vocals, and Abbie Goldberg also on backing vocals. I will do a variety of songs from country through to carols.

It will be very much a fun evening and for Gill and myself it's a way of saying thanks to a beautiful London church that has been a spiritual home for us.



The gig starts at 7pm and will finish at 9 - and I would welcome as many as possible coming so we can get a piano which can support the ministry of the church without doing the splits as someone is playing it!

The church is right next to Aldgate tube station, quite close to Aldgate East, and fairly close to Tower Hill. If anyone is able to come and join us as we say thank you to St Botolphs, I would personally be very grateful.

Prayer for a welcoming church

This concert falls just a few days before the start of Advent. The first Sunday in Advent is December 3rd and so this concert will be a few days before we light our first Advent candle. I love this time of Advent, this time of holy waiting.

**Oh God, we are grateful for the gift of music,
Grateful for the joy it can bring,
Grateful for the fun we can have together.
It will be a night to celebrate and give thanks
For the witness of this church - St Botolph's Aldgate -
That stands on the boundary of City and East End
Reflecting a welcoming gospel in the midst of diversity,
This church that has welcomed so many, including asylum seekers.
People travel to this church because it is inclusive,
An example to us all to love - everyone
And welcome - everyone.
So may this be an evening of joy and friendship,
Perhaps with a few carols that are pointers
To the holy waiting time of Advent that will soon be upon us.**

Amen

Garth Hewitt



Perfect for the Advent season or for Christmas presents, order Garth's lovely album **Peace at Christmas** [here](#)



Songs From the Fifth Gospel is a double CD collection of those of Garth's songs which have been written while he was in the Holy Land, or inspired by the people of the Holy Land. You can order your copy [here](#)



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**A YouTube clip of Garth singing One of Us during a Christmas concert - one
of the tracks on the Peace at Christmas album**

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