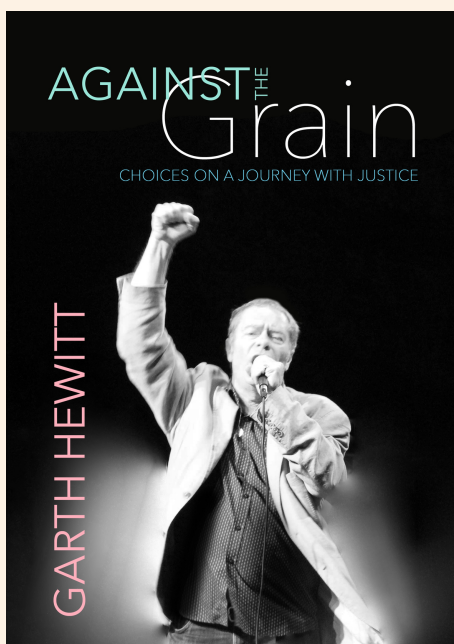




from Garth...

The book is very close...



My book *Against the Grain* is literally a **few days away** - also its accompanying double CD. Apologies to those who ordered it as far back as early December – it's taken longer than we expected!

I'm not quite sure how to describe the book, and haven't been from the beginning. I think "memoir" is probably the right word, which is used more often today; but basically it's autobiographical - though not exactly an A to Z through my life. Every chapter is named after an album, and may or may not relate to that album! When I started writing it, in March 2016, I was in Brazil for the Street Child Games. I remember wondering, "How do I jump into this?" It seemed best simply to start writing and then to try and shape it.

People say it takes two or three years to write a book of this sort - I hoped they were exaggerating, but I think in fact they're right!

At first it was a struggle wondering what to put in and what to leave out, but gradually certain themes began to break through - about what influenced me, in terms of music, spirituality, and issues of justice. I talk about the influence of Martin Luther King, who I heard speak at St Paul's Cathedral when I was a teenager; then about the influences of family, music and theology, and then certain aspects of the work that I have done, including the Greenbelt Festival; Amos Trust – its beginning and some key moments; and the journey of discovery in Palestine.

The chapter on Palestine I've called "Songs from the Fifth Gospel" - some of you will have heard me talk about why the Holy Land is referred to as the Fifth Gospel, a phrase from St Jerome in the fourth century - so the subtitle of this chapter is "From St Jerome to Banksy". The chapter comes right up to date with the Amos Trust walk from London to Jerusalem that arrived in Jerusalem on the 2nd of November last year, the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. I talk about the service held in St George's Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem to welcome the walkers, and also time spent in Bethlehem at Banksy's Walled Off Hotel, watching his Balfour orientated street party on the 1st of November, and my concert in the hotel on the evening of the 2nd.

The book then addresses some struggles with health and spirituality which relates to issues that involve myself and the family and how we journeyed through a time of struggles; and finally, the last chapter "Moonrise" is a Holy Week journey that I hope brings both hope and inspiration as a way to conclude the book.

I think it's done me good to write the book, though at times it hasn't felt like it! I think it's helped me to understand my vocation, and the book answers questions about ordination, vocation, songwriting, music and activism, and being a priest.

I hope it makes sense – but don't expect it to be too logical!

I realised early on that I would like to have photos dotted through the book, and I began to see that possibly what I wanted design-wise was modelled more on a magazine format. I had been given a book about Bob Dylan by my son Ben for Christmas which was more like an A4 size book, hard back, full of lots of pictures many of which were in colour, and I thought, this looks great! But I realised this would be very expensive to do, and Dylan would sell a few million more copies than my book! Then I was in the States and picked up a magazine on the life of Neil Young, and also a book that was a little smaller than magazine size but still very creative, by Noam Chomsky, and I began to see possibilities in a more populist design a little closer to a magazine - so we've ended up with something that is influenced in this direction.



Generally the advice was that this wasn't the best way to go in terms of design - but

I had something in my mind which gradually became stronger and stronger, and then when our book designs started to come back for me to look at I began to feel very excited because it was the kind of feel that I wanted.

Double CD - Against the Grain - Songs of peace, protest, poetry and prayer



The book includes stories behind some songs, so **this CD** has been produced as a companion to it. It has new songs like *Against the Grain* itself, demos not previously released, and songs from most stages of my career - some that won't have been heard for many years.

There is a group of peace songs, particularly on CD One; a group of poems on CD Two, and one or two oddities that creep in!

We came across three demos which we've included, one of them, *We Don't Do Body Counts*, was a demo for the '94 album *Stealing Jesus Back* but didn't make it onto the album – it still seems extremely relevant.

There are two others from around the 1980/81 time, which we managed to rescue from a cassette! They're a little bit rough! They are two country songs, one called *How the Dice Falls*, and the other *Golden Studded Jukebox*; they've never seen the light of day and I thought it would be fun to put them on this album.

We have also included the single *The Hungry Wind* that was released in 1982 on the Blue Moon label which was one of the labels of Magnum Force Records. This anti-nuclear weapons song comes across with a real strength. Its B side, *Red Hot and Cooking* is also on the album, a strange and fictitious story of an incredible rock and blues guitarist who was playing in a little club in New York – I think I'd only been to New York once at the time I wrote this and really knew nothing about it, and so I was pleased and surprised when a Christian radio station in New York chose it as the theme tune for one of their programmes – I wonder what they thought it was about!

I have four songs on the album to do with poetry – this links with Chapter Twelve in the book, "Liberty is Near!" with the subtitle "Poetry is a Human Right". One song is my tribute to the *Poets of Nicaragua*, recorded on the *Moonrise* album, another is *Hail Glorious Morn* from the album *Liberty is near!* which is songs from the Chartist

hymnbook of 1845; then there is one written by friend and poet the late Dave Rees who was with the band The Mighty Flyers. This was recorded in 1974 – it's a very powerful spiritual poem called *Number One*. The fourth song to do with poets is a song from the album *I Shall Be Made Thy Musique* where I put poems of the metaphysical poets to music, working with the harpsichordist Penny Cave. The track I've chosen is George Herbert's wonderful poem *Love Bade Me Welcome*.

Also in 1974 I recorded a track with the Chris Barber Jazz and Blues Band, called *I Will Return*, a joyful piece of traditional jazz that later led into a TV programme that we did together one Good Friday, called "The Reason and the Rhyme".



with Chris Barber

The new songs on the album include the title track *Against the Grain, Lifeline of Hope* (about the work of Joy Junction homeless shelter in Albuquerque and its founder Jeremy Reynolds), a new recording of *Do Unto Others*, and a song by American songwriter Guy Clark called *Immigrant Eyes*. The musicians playing on the new tracks are Chris Rogers on fiddle, Paul McDowell on accordion, Pete Banks and Abbie Goldberg on backing vocals, all produced by Kevin Duncan who is also on keyboards and other instruments.

Another new track is *Come Home Mar Gregorios*, a prayer about the kidnapped Syrian Orthodox Archbishop of Aleppo, Mar Gregorios. This was recorded in Georgeham in Devon – the vicar of the local church, Mike Newbon, had formally been studio manager of ICC Studios in Eastbourne and has his own small studio in his house. I recorded the song there, my daughter-in-law Eils is on backing vocals, and then my son Ben brought in their three children – my grandchildren, Harley, Caitlin and Aisha. Great to have them on this – their first recording - they sang beautifully! Mike then added some bass and Nashville high strung guitar.

As it's tricky to fit the lyrics for 31 songs on a CD cover – oh how I miss vinyl LPs! - Isobel, my PA, is putting together a lyric sheet of all the songs on the album, with details of where they appear in the book i.e. page numbers. This will be available on the website or at concerts.

Words of Hope for Jerusalem



WORDS OF HOPE

EASTER FOR JERUSALEM

THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS FOR
HOLY WEEK FROM AMOS TRUST

[click here for your free download](#)

Trust has put together a series of thoughts and reflections for Holy Week with a focus on Jerusalem. This year more than ever we need to pray for peace and justice in a shared Jerusalem, and for justice for all people in the Holy Land. These

words will be useful for prayers and meditations, sometimes poignant, sometimes challenging, but words that will help us in our journey through Holy Week to Easter.

You can download a free copy from the Amos Trust website [here](#)

Prayer for Jerusalem

Some words from one of the prayers in Words of Hope - this is a favourite prayer of mine for Jerusalem and the Holy Land by former BBC Correspondent and Middle East Correspondent for the Church Times, Gerald Butt –

**O Lord soften the stone hearts
Of those who preach and practice
Intolerance and bigotry;
As the sun's setting glow
Softens the stone walls of your Holy
city,
Jerusalem.**

**Lord, the rocky hills, the valleys,
The deserts and the sea shores
Are filled with the echoes of centuries of pain.**

**Lord, bring peace to house and village.
Comfort the mothers who fret and those who
mourn.**

Lord, keep strong the twisted old root



Of the olive tree, and protect the young vine.

Lord of water and stone,
Of bread and wine,
Lord of resurrection,
Feed hope and bring peace
To the wracked but beautiful Holy Land.

Amen

Garth's book *Against the Grain*, is available to order now on his website [here](#)

and the companion double CD *Against the Grain* is available to order [here](#)

We are offering a special price for the book and CD together, of £25 plus £2 postage - to take up this special offer email info@garthhewitt.org stating name and address, and whether you prefer to pay by cheque or bank transfer

We expect to have the book and CD available by the end of March

©2018 Garth Hewitt Foundation | 186 Hykeham Road, Lincoln, LN6 8AP

[Web Version](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by [Mad Mimi®](#)
A GoDaddy® company