



from Garth...

Small Oases of Hope - in difficult times

1 San Pedro Sula

Many years back Gill and I visited Honduras at the invitation of Bishop Leo Fradé, at that time Bishop of Honduras. We were based in San Pedro Sula and visited a variety of Anglican churches, and were inspired by the communities we met and how they lived out the gospel in very practical ways. I wrote a song about it called **Community of Love**.



Garth with Bishop Leo Fradé

Since then many things have changed in Honduras - in 2009 the president, Manuel Zelaya, was deposed in a military coup. His left-of-centre politics were not popular with the United States, but under the new leaders poverty has increased to an alarming extent.

The other day I was watching a news item filmed in San Pedro Sula, which had been a beautiful town when we visited but now suffers from much violence and the result of increased poverty for most people.

Ironically a thousand people were leaving to march towards the US border – yet another large group to head there from Honduras.

One can't help feeling that the US interference in Honduran politics, especially to push things in a more neo-liberal way, has multiplied poverty - after a while the poor are not able to live, and so we see these huge processions of refugees heading to the States because of their desperation. We've all heard President Trump's views of these groups of people - yet there seems to be an issue of reaping what you've sown in terms of the interference in Honduran politics (done by his predecessor's

government).



O Pequeno Nazareno

2 Fortaleza

Violence can erupt under the sheer pressure of poverty - Fortaleza was the first town I visited in Brazil, this was in 1990. I spent time visiting street children with Compassion International, and wrote the song **Little Outlaws Dirty Angels** as a result. Since then we have

been out in Brazil for both the Street Child Football World Cup and also the Street Child Games - both held in Rio. A team came down from Fortaleza, from an organisation called **O Pequeno Nazareno (The Little Nazarene)**, and it was moving to talk with both those who were leading the team, and the young people themselves, about Fortaleza. Since then violence has erupted - these are very dangerous times for everyone there. It was hard enough at the time of the first Street Child World Cup, as the Captain of the Fortaleza team had been murdered just a few weeks before they came down for the games.

But behind these headlines it's good to remember there are groups working, like O Pequeno Nazareno in Fortaleza, and **Our Little Roses in San Pedro Sula in Honduras, where the Bishop's wife, Diana Fradé, runs support for children who would otherwise be on the street. They are oases of hope in difficult times in the community of love.**

3 Democracy Now!

Independent Global News Broadcaster - a hopeful news outlet

There seems to be an inclination to think that political mistakes in conflicts have no legacy, but they do. Have a look at **this clip of top US General Wesley Clark** as he guests on **the Amy Goodman show 'Democracy Now'** – it is a quite staggering



Amy Goodman, presenting 'Democracy Now!' -

realisation of the very odd military response to 9/11, which still goes on and, basically, has resulted in most of the disasters in the Middle East, and of course the flood of refugees that have flowed from this.

a news programme that stands up for peace and justice

It should worry us, not only about the direction that was taken at that time, but also the ongoing directions at the moment, and **this includes Britain with our arms sales and indeed our military.**

Music of hope

One of the things that always encourages me is when art, creativity, poetry and music are used to show that there is a better way to live than conflict, violence, arms sales and benefits for a few people. The loving community of the kingdom of God should be the model that we live. Here are a couple of songs where that message of friendship, inclusion and hope stands out in these difficult times, and they are a reminder of how we should be living.



4 Land of the Free

The first song is by The Killers (perhaps an unfortunate name?) called **Land of the free**. Brandon Flowers, lead singer of the band, started writing this song after the awful massacre at Sandy Hook school. He says, "My church upbringing taught me to mourn with those who mourn and I did it the best that I knew how, I cried for those kids and their teachers, I got on my knees and I prayed for their families." And he goes on

to talk of other issues and says, "We dishonour our values, our ancestors and our heritage when we tear gas our brothers and sisters seeking asylum... you've gotta believe that we can do better."

5 We Won't Keep Quiet

Another musician who picks up on this is Iris Dement. Her music is a mixture of folk, country and gospel. She writes about various issues. **Her latest song and video is called We won't keep quiet – it's well worth a watch.**

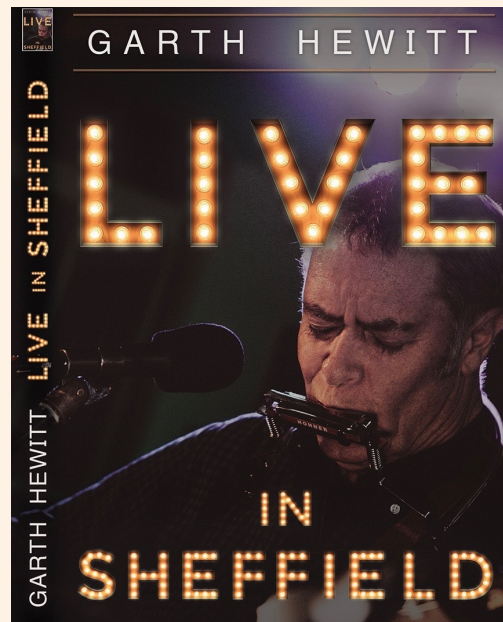
In a way her video says it all, as she is in a demonstration with a very diverse group of people holding slogans that reflect a commitment to human rights, human dignity

and justice. Something like this is a real reminder that love for community, and music that reflects this, is a great sign of hope. You can't build walls around this song!

These are two songs that speak prophetically to the situation in the United States at the moment, but of course they are just as relevant to our own situation in our little country with its “hostile environment”.

Live in Sheffield!

For the last eighteen months my concerts were the Against the Grain tour, which I thoroughly enjoyed. Eventually **the book** came out... and the **CD!**... and **after about a year of this tour my PA Isobel decided it was time it was filmed.** She explained to me that 1991 was the last time I'd been filmed in concert. It turned out that Sheffield was a great place to film it - it was a warm and friendly evening, and interestingly I knew many people in the audience from different stages of my ministry.



As I look at the film footage I spot someone who was in our youth club at St Luke's Maidstone when I was Curate there! I spot people who have promoted concerts for me through the years, people who have been on Amos journeys with us to the Holy Land, Nicaragua, even South Africa. I spot someone who has sung songs of mine in all sorts of different places, which I always feel is a great compliment. And there's a thirteen-year-old lad who comes regularly to my concerts when I'm in his area - **so there's a good mixture of supporters, encouragers, and friends.**

I'll let my PA **Isobel** say something about the DVD project:

“As Garth says - the last time a full concert of his has been filmed and made available to people was in 1991 - that was “Lonesome Troubadour”, a Greenbelt concert. I thought it would be great to have **a DVD of an up-to-date live concert**, so we contacted a film company we know, **Let There Be Light Productions** (LTBL). They are based in Sheffield where Garth had been booked by Tanya and Simon Ennals for a concert at St Mark's Church, Broomfield Road. The crew were great,

filming unobtrusively on the night and then doing a great job editing. The DVD will be available from the middle of February – it's called "Live in Sheffield" and if you want to order a copy you can email me, isobel@garthhewitt.org and be in the first mailing when the stock arrives!

I've been attending Garth concerts for over thirty years - **Garth brings a mixture of challenge, hope, humour, faith and peace to his audiences. The world seems to get crazier and further from the ideals of God every day – Garth's songs and stories put things back in perspective and root us in truth and goodness** – and of course we need that even when we can't get along to one of his concerts! I'm pleased with the end result of the filming, it has a very down-to-earth, live feel – **if you've been to a Garth concert this will take you right back there, and if you haven't you will feel as though you have once you've seen Live in Sheffield."**

Prayer - Community of love... in difficult times

Generous God

We thank you for the model of
the community of love which you showed us
We thank you for the witness of churches in
San Pedro Sula, Honduras

Of Pequeno Nazareno working with street
children in Fortaleza Brazil

We thank you for the artists and broadcasters
that reflect the truth in difficult times

We thank you for all those who make visible
the loving spirit of your gospel.

We pray that we will find that strength,
that we will link arms together,
to be a community of hope

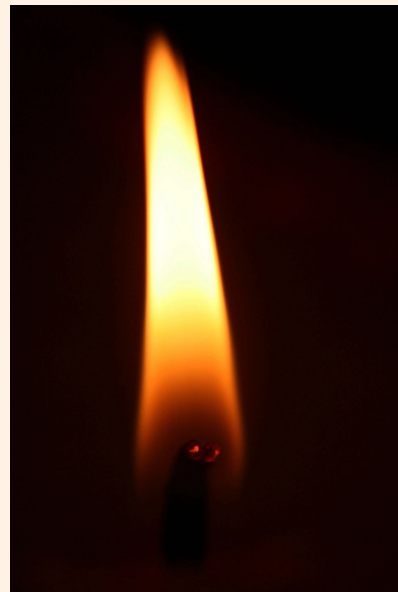
These are hard times, even puzzling times,
so we need to be reminded day by day
to make a difference -

to reject the ways of violence

We thank you for those who have been examples to us

We thank you for those who picked up the torch and led the way
May we do the same

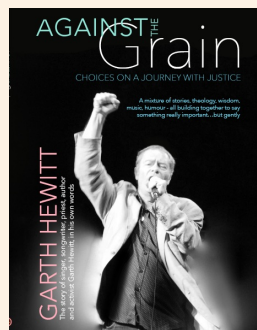
And may our churches bring hope that resonates for all,
May they be courageous, prophetic, loving and just.



Community of Love

"She was welcomed to the family of the carpenter from Nazareth
Where those who are forgotten find strength to start again
They find mercy and forgiveness and in linking arms together
They are lifted up to dignity in a community of love
She found strength in a community of love
She found love in a community of faith
She found faith in a community of God
She found God in a community of love"

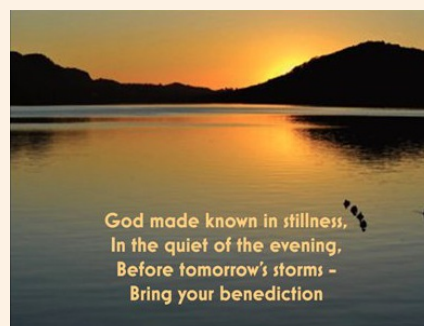
Garth Hewitt



buy Garth's book [here](#)



buy Garth's latest double CD [here](#)



buy note cards with Garth's lyrics here



*click here to follow
Garth on Twitter*



*click here to follow
Garth on Facebook*

©2019 Garth Hewitt Foundation | 186 Hykeham Road, Lincoln, LN6 8AP

[Web Version](#)

[Preferences](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by **Mad Mimi**®
A GoDaddy® company