

AUTUMN 2022

# IGNITE

SPARKING PASSION FOR THE GOSPEL  
ACROSS THE UK



“WITHOUT GOD,  
I AM SUNK”

HOW GOD CAN USE OUR DARKEST  
MOMENTS FOR HIS PURPOSES

**ALSO** MARTIN ERWIN SETS OUT THE NEW VISION FOR COUNTIES  
THE LIFE EXHIBITION IS BACK ON THE ROAD. OUR EDITOR  
SEES IT IN ACTION



# WELCOME TO IGNITE



In this edition of Ignite we will explore some big themes that I hope will bless and inspire you.

Counties Training Officer, Beverley Bedford brings a challenge about training and why training evangelists is essential for every local church. As she reflects: *"The church has never been called to maintenance but mission and to rise to the challenge in taking this Christ proclaiming, reconciling message of salvation to every man, women, boy and girl"*.

On page 12, I seek to unpack how Counties' new mission statement more fully reflects the work of the evangelist in 21st century Britain. Our desire is to strategically network with YOUR local church, so that you may be equipped and grow. The strength of Counties is really only measured by the effectiveness of mission through and from the local church.

Three Counties evangelists share deeply of how God has used them through the various challenges of mental health, broken communities, and spending time to walk with people to see them won for Christ.

Thank you for your prayers and support,

**Martin**

Counties exists to make Jesus known across the UK through our evangelists, exhibitions and resources, in biblically faithful and culturally relevant ways.

Counties (formerly Counties Evangelistic Work) is a Registered Charity No. 264278 and a Company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales No. 1041761  
Address: Counties, 30 Haynes Road, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 3HD  
Telephone: 01373 823 013 Email: [office@countiesuk.org](mailto:office@countiesuk.org) [www.countiesuk.org](http://www.countiesuk.org)  
Thank you for your valued partnership. We are glad to make Ignite available free of charge. It costs approximately £5 per year to produce and distribute this newsletter to you. Every additional contribution will help us continue in our mission.  
Editor: Rachel Rounds - [communications@countiesuk.org](mailto:communications@countiesuk.org)  
Design: Amperative - [amperative.com](http://amperative.com)



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 6-7 Counties Training Officer, Beverley Bedford, explains why Counties is a good training choice.
- 8-11 Ignite's editor gets her first look at the Life exhibition as it visits her home town.
- 12-15 Martin Erwin sets out the new vision for Counties.
- 16-17 When others urged him to give up, Counties Evangelist, Martin Korchinsky, held onto the prophetic word he was given.
- 18-21 "Without God, I am sunk." Counties Evangelist, Penny Curley, reflects on how sharing her own mental health challenges has led to a lifelong ministry.
- 22-25 Counties Evangelist, Colin Johnson, explains how 1-2-1 evangelism has shaped his ministry.
- 26 Just a Minute with Jean Campbell.



16



18

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## THE LIFE EXHIBITION BUSY ATTRACTING POTENTIAL NEW CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS

Life exhibition Coordinator, Kevin Baldwin, has been busy visiting conferences to share what the Life exhibition has to offer.

He attended BOOST - a networking group for organisations working with children and young people in the South East, and the SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) conference in Norfolk.

Kevin also gave a talk at the AREIAC conference, which is the professional Association for RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants. Kevin said:



*"The conferences were very good, lots of contacts were made. There was a lot of interest from places as far afield as Wales, Southampton, Colchester and Hastings. Please pray that these openings will bear fruit for the Life exhibition but also GSUS Live and all our schools' resources."*

If your church would like to find out more visit: [countiesuk.org/schools-resources-intro](https://countiesuk.org/schools-resources-intro)

## DUNCAN ROAD CHURCH, SOUTHAMPTON, FOUNDED BY COUNTIES EVANGELIST, CELEBRATES CENTENARY

The assembly was started after Counties Evangelist, Arthur Moore, from Brighton, held a children's mission in the area in 1921.

In 1922, a tin hut (Swanwick Gospel Hall) was erected, and over 200 children attended the Sunday school each week.

Below: Children's Mission 1921



On 2 May 1966, the hut was replaced by the current structure and renamed Duncan Road Church.

The new building was opened 21 May 1967 - a defining moment in the life of the church and in the lives of many individuals. Duncan Road Church is now home to Counties evangelists Gordon and Penny Curley.

## M4 CONFERENCE IN NORWAY GREAT SUCCESS

Counties CEO, Martin Erwin and James Hyde, the Counties Planting Network Consultant, visited the M4 Europe National Leaders gathering in Norway.

Participants were reminded of the three phases of the start-up path in church planting.

- The first, preparing a healthy leader with a team of 6-8 people.
- The second, introducing training to help a team grow to 25-30 adults.
- And the third phase, growing beyond 25-30 adults: multiplying disciples, leaders, and communities.

James says: *"The fuel for ministry is being faithful to the mission, not results. We won't see the full results on this side of eternity, but it is worth it! Jesus always comes with us."*

*"We left with hearts full of gratitude and our minds filled with new ideas and specific plans on how to reach new people and form new communities."*

*"God is at work in His Church across Europe and Counties is humbled and excited to be part of this work."*

To begin the church planting journey visit: [counties-training.org/counties-church-planting](https://counties-training.org/counties-church-planting)

## WHY NOT LAUNCH NEIGHBOURHOOD CHAPLAINS IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

This easy-to-follow timeline shows you how.

### 1 Book on to Inform & Inspire

15 September

[counties-training.org/event-details/inform-and-inspire-sept-2022](https://counties-training.org/event-details/inform-and-inspire-sept-2022)

### 2 Team Training

Receive training pack.

Online training via Zoom with a team size of around 3-7 people.

10 & 17 October

[counties-training.org/event-details/chaplains-team-training-oct-1](https://counties-training.org/event-details/chaplains-team-training-oct-1)

### 3 Scheme Membership

£25 per month

Receive team handbook, lanyard, access to Neighbourhood Chaplains resources and ongoing support from the Neighbourhood Chaplains team.

### 4 Scheme Launch

Make contact with new people in your community!

Deepen community links - opening opportunities for the Gospel.

Offer practical support to those in need.

For more information, contact: [resources@countiesuk.org](mailto:resources@countiesuk.org)

# COUNTIES TRAINING OFFICER, BEVERLEY BEDFORD EXPLAINS WHY COUNTIES IS A GOOD TRAINING CHOICE



**Firstly, just remind readers what training Counties offers.**

**Evangelist Training Programme (ETP)** a one-year programme for those called and recognised as having a gift for evangelism.

**Training in Evangelism and Mission (TEAM)** a gap year programme for young people between 16-25 years of age.

**Neighbourhood Chaplains** – for a church team (minimum of 3-4 volunteers) who want to train for community outreach.

**There are many Christians doing great evangelistic work, so why train with Counties?**

Counties has been training evangelists since 1899. I think its 'unique selling point' is that it offers a Gospel centred training experience. In the training

and formation of an evangelist there must be the apostolic emphasis of prayer, pioneering ministry of the Word, living by faith and equipping others.

Counties training seeks to support, enthuse, empower and model 'tried and tested' methods passed on by evangelists with a broad spectrum of ministries. Applicants are attracted to Counties training simply for the hands-on approach that gets to grips with the practicalities.

**Why is evangelism important within the local church?**

There is no greater or more urgent priority for the church than evangelism. This was emphasised by the apostle Paul who said, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself and has committed to us the message of reconciliation' (2 Cor. 5:19).

The church has never been called to maintenance but mission and to rise to the challenge in taking this Christ proclaiming, reconciling message of salvation.

**Why do you have such a personal passion to see this work fulfilled?**

I pray I never become numb to the real and unchanging need of people who, without Christ, are lost and without hope.

D.L. Moody said, 'You can do the work of ten men, or teach ten men

to do the work' which is why I think training and equipping others is so important. I see an urgent need for more workers called by God to evangelise, a rapidly mobilised workforce driven by a passion to spend and be spent for kingdom advancement in making disciples who go on to make disciples.

As you read this, what part will you play in this great task?

**Why not visit our training website:** [counties-training.org](https://counties-training.org)

## 2021-2022 ETP graduates tell Ignite why they're delighted to have taken part.



**Stevie Walker lives in Paignton, Devon. He is married to Natalie, and they have seven children.**

*What a fantastic course. If it wasn't for Counties, I would not have had the opportunities to preach in other churches and be encouraged by so many people who read my newsletter and hear how they are supporting me in prayer.*

*I have been able to join in with outreach events with other evangelists, I have gained experience and had ideas which have helped me organise different types of outreaches in my local area.*



**Gabriel Bennett lives in Ramsey Mereside, near Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire.**

*I have a deep sense of gratitude to God and the wonderful people with whom I have worked for a jam-packed programme of experiences, seminars and reflections. I have considered what is the irreducible core of the Gospel, been made aware of safeguarding issues, witnessed inspirational outreach to Muslims, prison work and primary schools, and preached in town centres.*

*I would recommend it to anyone who feels called but is conscious of their need for support and fellowship.*

## RACHEL ROUNDS, TOURS THE LIFE EXHIBITION FOR THE FIRST TIME, AS IT VISITS HER HOME TOWN OF CALNE, IN WILTSHIRE

As the editor of Ignite magazine, I've had the privilege of writing about the amazing work of Counties staff and evangelists across the UK over the last eighteen months. I've been completely blown away by the love, faith, joy, tenacity, and commitment towards the Great Commission, shown by the Counties family.

At the end of every interview, I've always been blessed by God, utterly humbled, and changed in some small, deep way, I find hard to put into words – even though writing is my business.

Because of Covid, however, all these interviews have been conducted over the phone and I've had to try and imagine what GSUS Live feels like for children, and what Neighbourhood Chaplains mean to their communities.

So, it's a fantastic privilege to write about the first Counties project I've seen in person, after the Life exhibition visited my home town.

It was jointly hosted by Calne Free Church and Calne Evangelical Church for a week in June. Avril Kassell was one of the main organisers:

*"We thought it was a great way to reach primary school children in Calne with the truth about Jesus."*

*"We had one training evening together. And then we were sent training videos that people could have for their specific job. We try and match the people to the job, and what they feel they are able to do."*

*"Some people enjoy talking from the front, others would rather work behind the scenes. And then a whole host of*

*"I liked learning about how Jesus was a miracle worker and that He lived 2000 years ago and lots of what He said is so useful for people now. It was fun because you watched the videos and songs that had been put together to represent Jesus."*

*(Ayda, Holy Trinity Academy)*



*"I like listening with the headphones, and the last piece that we did was really fun because you got to give your opinion."*

*(Grace, Holy Trinity Academy)*

*people are praying. So, there's work for everyone."*

As I arrived at Calne Free Church, I was greeted by enthusiastic volunteers; and a group of Year 5 children, from Holy Trinity C of E Academy, who were sitting, silently enraptured, as they watched a video about Jesus.

As it finished, a volunteer asked the children about some of responses in the film. The Holy Trinity pupils were quick to respond: *"It was an angel not a fairy"* piped up one little girl.

*"It was frankincense not Frankenstein,"* laughed another boy. No flies on this group.

And then they were off – split into three groups – and sitting in three pods: *Life Line*, *Life Talks*, and *Life Works*.

I joined *Life Works* as another volunteer confidentially talked to them about the miracles of Jesus.

Then, they were asked to pop on the headphones and grab a tablet which

asks them questions and plays a video. Depending on which pod they are in – it shows the Nativity, Jesus turning water into wine, or the parable of the lost sheep. Each tablet session lasts just over six minutes.

The children were so engrossed I decided that Spiderman and the cast of Frozen could have walked into the room and they wouldn't have noticed. I even saw a couple of them get up to move to the next pod with their headphones still firmly stuck to their ears – they didn't want to let go.

Their class teacher, Abigail Moore, agrees:

*"I think the technology gets them in – things like iPads, QR codes. Headphones are especially great because they can't talk to each other," she laughs.*

From there we moved onto *Life Talks* where the pupils learned about the parables of Jesus.

I loved the way the volunteer read a quote on the pod wall which said: *"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind,"* and then asked the children where the quote was from. One excited boy put his

hand up and simultaneously shouted *"Neil Armstrong"*. I suspected we had a future astronaut in our midst.

The quotation is a fantastic way to teach children the power of memorable words and stories.

And there is none more powerful than the parable of the Good Samaritan which the children interpreted as: *"Don't judge a book by its cover,"* and *"Always be kind and help people"*.

*"I've learned that Jesus is a really special person - not just to his disciples but to more people."*

*(Logan, Holy Trinity Academy)*

What struck me was the great interaction between the volunteers and the children. Even when the children didn't get things right, there was no sense of them being told: *"You're wrong"* but they were gently led to understand what was right.

Also, I never got the sense that the children felt they were being taught at all. They were so engaged and having fun, that they didn't appear to realise they were learning.



I could see their little brains, like sponges, whirring round, taking in the videos, the tablets, the quizzes, the lessons on the pod walls – but it was just right.

There was enough to keep them engaged, but not too much to overwhelm them - a feeling shared by the volunteers:

*"Counties provide us with everything we need. They not only give us the equipment in the hall, but the coat hangers for us to use for the children," says Avril Kassell.*

*"They also give us everything for the café. It works like clockwork and runs itself."*

The penultimate session involved the children coming back together to watch a video about Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

I was curious to see how this would be portrayed – as there is no nice way to tell children that Jesus was nailed to a cross.

The video showed a 'real' film of Jesus, rather than a drawing or painting. The actual crucifixion scene was long enough to make an impact but not too long that it upset the pupils.

I watched their faces very carefully and didn't see any of them looking disturbed. As Abigail Moore says:

*"The video was quite emotive. They came out and said: 'That moved me to tears,' and I think they really felt something during that video."*

The session finished with biscuits and juice in the café where the final treat was an interactive quiz where the children used electronic clickers to answer questions on a screen which Abigail Moore loved because *"it gave the children who were really quiet a chance to have their say"*.

The final question didn't have a right or wrong answer. It simply asked: *"What do YOU think now about Jesus?"*

It's a question that I pray those children will take away with them and hold in their hearts till they find the answer – and, one day, come to know Him as their Lord and Saviour.

**For more information about Counties' schools resources such as the Life exhibition visit [countiesuk.org/life-expo](https://countiesuk.org/life-expo)**



## INSPIRING AND EQUIPPING LOCAL CHURCHES

CEO, Martin Erwin, shares the exciting new vision for Counties

For many years Counties has supported evangelists as well as developing resources such as **GSUS Live, the Life exhibition and Key to Life for schools' work.** Our mission statement 'Making Jesus known across the UK' has reflected this commitment.



At our recent Trustees strategy review we reflected on the nature of the work and calling of the evangelist. In the New Testament, Philip is an evangelist (Acts 21:8). His ministry takes him from a revival and fruitful mission in Samaria to a personal encounter with the Ethiopian Chancellor in a chariot, and then on again to another mission.

For many, their vision of a Counties evangelist looks like Philip. Moving from place to place, based in a region, and taking the Gospel to the people whose hearts God opens, and into the places where God leads. Counties is deeply committed to continue to find and fellowship with and support such evangelists.



### What is a Counties evangelist, and could you become one?

We look for evangelists who exhibit some distinct qualities:

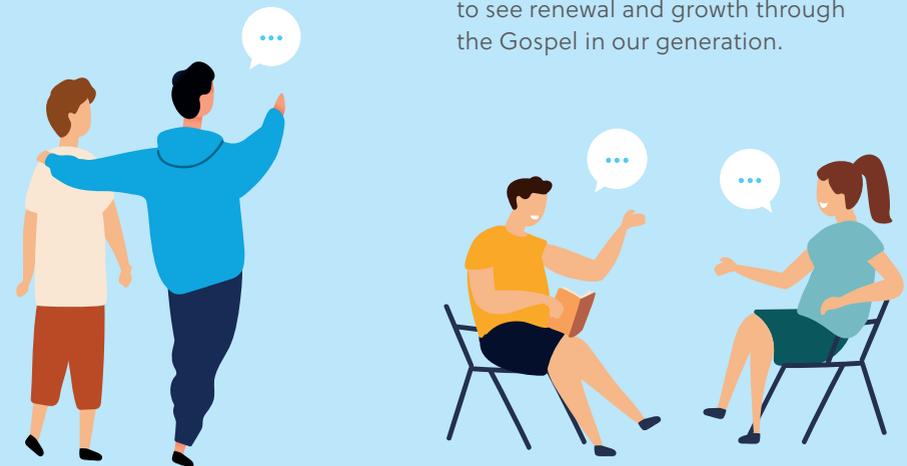
- 1 They are clearly able to communicate the Gospel.
- 2 They have a pioneering spirit, being able to initiate and start things.
- 3 They have an understanding of and willingness to live by faith, particularly in regard to financial support.
- 4 They are committed to equipping others in making Jesus known.

At our strategy review we recognised that the second and vital role of evangelists, and of a ministry such as Counties, is clearly expressed in Ephesians 4:11-12.

*So, Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...*

Whilst 'equipping God's people' is expressed in the fourth quality listed above, we believe that it must become a more central part of the work of Counties in the days ahead.

In my article in Ignite Summer 2022, I reflected on the growing weakness and loss of strength being experienced by many local churches. Equipping the local church must be strategic if we are to see renewal and growth through the Gospel in our generation.



### So how do we intend to do this?

**Firstly**, we are changing our mission statement to state this emphasis explicitly. Publications and communications will now carry the new strapline 'Making Jesus known: inspiring and equipping local churches.'

**Secondly**, as Ephesians 4 makes clear, this is not a solo effort. It is the Lord who appoints the gifted people, so we continue to look to Him for direction and people.

The passage is also clear that equipping the church is not simply the work of the evangelist. Other key gifted and called leaders are necessary to fulfil this commission.

Counties will continue to collaborate, working together with others to equip God's people for works of service, so that the Church might be built up.

**Thirdly**, we hope to be a catalyst in this regard. Over the coming year we will seek to connect more strongly with local churches and groups in various regions to explore how we might work together to inspire and equip local churches, networking together to this end.

In all this, we do not intend to lose the driving focus and call that the Lord has placed on us: to make Jesus known!

Our desire is to partner with those who are committed to fulfilling the Great Commission, to:

*"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."*

Matthew 28:19-20

### What can you do?

- **Pray for Counties Evangelists** and this new emphasis in our role.
- **Train with us** – is God calling you or someone you know to do the work of the evangelist? Why not train with us, and join our Evangelists Training Programme.
- **Work with us** – Are you a leader in a local church? Let us know how we might be able to help you as you seek to make Jesus known.
- **Support the work** – why not partner with us to support Gospel work in the UK and the raising up and training of a new generation of evangelists and leaders.

## Making Jesus known: inspiring and equipping local churches



# “YOU WILL LIE WITH THE SHEEP THAT NOBODY ELSE WILL LIE WITH”

When others urged him to give up, Counties Evangelist, Martin Korchinsky, held onto the prophetic word he was given.

Before he became a Pastor of Brinnington Community Church, in Stockport, Martin was given a word of knowledge, at a men's weekend, by the speaker:

*“He looked at me and said: ‘Don’t be discouraged. You lie with the sheep that no one else will lie with,’ and I knew that was true.”*  
Martin says through tears.

*“So, even now, when I am surrounded by chaos, I hold onto that.”*

Based on the edge of a council estate with just under 10,000 residents, life can be tough and Martin's ministry didn't get off to the easiest of starts.



Martin and Angie

*“It could have been a low time when I came to Counties because the church where I’d been, cut off the funding for Brinnington – a church plant – and made me redundant.”*

*“I never felt like throwing in the towel because God gave me such confidence that it was all going to go forward. In fact, the day the financing finished we received a random gift of £4000.”*

Alongside this and the money Counties gave him, Martin and his wife Angie began fostering, which they felt called to do – this gave them an income and enabled them to pay their own bills and keep the church afloat.

Today the church is at the heart of the community. They run a food bank, a youth club, toddler group, drop in café. Brinnington was also a pioneer of the Neighbourhood Chaplains scheme which is still going strong.

Martin's faith, belief in God's commitment to him spills over in his commitment to others:

*“If God brings somebody into church and that person is very difficult, hard to convince and rejects God, but they keep coming; I consider that He has brought them here for a reason. So, I will stick at it to the end.”*

Martin recalls a time when one of his team members left the church saying:

*“Martin, you are wasting your time with that woman. She hates God. She told me that if I ever talked about God, she was going to headbutt me.”*

‘That woman’ was called Hazel and she'd had an extremely tough life. She'd been trafficked and abused. Consequently, she trusted no one. But Martin committed to her, and slowly she started to trust Martin.

*“She would hold her fingers out two inches apart and say: ‘I trust you this much Martin’. And over time her fingers would get wider apart. And I would say: ‘I am glad you trust me. I will try to live up to your trust. But there is one who is much more trustworthy than me, and you know who that is.’”*

Hazel started coming to church because she said she liked the music. One day she said to Martin:

*“You know what?”* And she held out her fingers two inches apart.

Martin said: *“Oh, had my trust gone down?”*

Then it dawned on Martin what Hazel meant and he replied: *“Have you started to trust Jesus?”*

Hazel nodded and replied: *“Only that much.”* And Martin danced and shouted: *“Hallelujah”.*

Hazel gave her life to Lord – even seeing God heal the grip in her hand after she had a stroke – something she proudly showed everyone on the housing estate by very tightly squeezing their hands to prove it.

Sadly, Hazel died but, in the years leading up to her death, she was fully immersed in church life and a real witness for Christ on the estate.

Martin adds: *“With Hazel, in the early days, I was getting so much flak from my team”,* but Martin prayed.

*“I felt God rebuke me. It’s seared on my heart. He said: ‘If I have you there for the rest of your life to save one person, you stay there’.*

*“So, that’s what I signed up for really. I will never have a big church but it’s not about numbers. I lie down with the sheep that nobody else will lie with.”*



# “WITHOUT GOD, I AM SUNK”

Counties Evangelist, Penny Curley, reflects on how she's shared God's love with others by being vulnerable about her own mental health struggles.



Penny Curley does an enormous amount of work: She is an Evangelists Representative on the Counties Trustee Board, she sits on the Schools' Resources Steering Group, and is the Cluster Leader for the South-Central Evangelists group.

She works alongside her husband Gordon, who is also a Counties Evangelist, and she is involved in a host of women's groups, prayer groups and children's activities.

She's warm-hearted, funny, self-deprecating, go-getting, and loves God with all her heart.

But, as anyone who works closely with other people on a daily basis will attest, it can be emotionally exhausting, and Penny bravely and honestly admits:

*"I don't always cope terribly well, to be honest. I suffer with bouts of poor mental health, which most people are very surprised about, but it does come with the territory if you are*

*someone who invests heavily in other's lives. It takes a toll. Three years ago, I collapsed suddenly with exhaustion."*

Far from feeling embarrassed about what some may see as a weakness, Penny sees her struggles and vulnerabilities as part of her ministry – particularly with other women.

*"You can rub along on the surface with anybody, but if you want to actively engage with a person, you need to get under that surface and very few people will let you there unless they have seen the vulnerable side of you first."*

Penny first encountered Counties through Gordon, whom she married in 1997. She was a primary school teacher in London, but she chose to stop teaching when they had children and became a full-time mum.

During those early years Penny saw *"the need everywhere of people needing time"*. She set up a toddler group called Noah's Ark,

with a Christian friend and invited along some of the other new mums she'd met.

'Noah's Ark is still going strong, and after running for nearly 21 years, has enabled many, many great conversations and friendships.

Penny also set up a little Bible study group as she found that many of the younger Christian women she encountered didn't pray aloud or have much spiritual confidence.

*"I provided them with a 'safe place' to practice praying out loud and somewhere to talk through issues that made a difference to them"*.

This was the first of many groups that have come and gone over the years.

*"The more you spend time with people, the more you see gaps where a prayer group, a Bible study, or a social setting will give people a place to talk about their faith."*

*"People are very cautious about who they really are – their real worries and concerns. They want to know that you are prepared to put a bit on the line first and it can be a very slow process."*

Whilst doing all this Penny was working alongside Gordon who had added an Eldership role at Duncan Road Church, Fareham, to his long list of commitments. She ran (and still does) the children's teaching on a Sunday and a kids and youth group with Gordon during the week.

Penny was also speaking at Ladies' meetings, running crafting events as bridge-builders for adults and teens, and taking their two children with her to help Gordon to holiday clubs, house-parties, camps and conferences, and generally operating as his editor and 'social side-kick'.





Although Penny's life was, and still is, extremely busy, it's that busyness that's brought her to where she is today and to the very heart of her ministry.

*"A lot of what I did then and now is organised stuff, but I still find that having time and space for people is one of the most valuable things I can offer. That's what nobody had then or has now – the time. I try to be as generous with my time as I can."*

Penny finds that, particularly with young mums, she can come

alongside them, even for a season, to support them and listen to them when they are going through a hard time.

*"One girl told me by accident that she was having problems by sending me a text that was meant for somebody else. She was mortified and I think she thought I was going to cut off our friendship completely but instead I was able to say, 'Come round and let's talk about it and let's see if we can find a way through it together.'*

*"We talked a lot and I prayed with her, and she went on later to do the Christianity Explored course and although she hasn't developed that, we are still very much in contact, and she is always asking for my opinion and response to different things.*

*"Most of these relationships are very long term. I try my best to hold on to friendships made and to keep them alive and active."*

It's this commitment to long-term relationships that are rooted and grounded in true friendship and vulnerability that has enabled Penny to continue her ministry and touch the lives of so many.

*"People are very cautious about who they really are – their real worries and concerns. They want to know that you are prepared to put a bit on the line first and it can be a very slow process."*

Penny believes that talking about her struggles can help others to open-up, but she admits that at times she still feels like hiding.

*"When I have a bad week, I don't really want to talk to anybody, and I don't really want to do anything. But it keeps me humble because it reminds me that if I am trying to do this by myself; without God, I am sunk. I am so crushed and feeble at times.*

*"Often during these times, I feel that it takes everything in me just to get up. All I can do is stand and that's only because of what Christ has done for me, and that's all He wants me to do for that moment.*

*"But the fact you can say to someone: 'I am standing, feeling like this,' sometimes allows the other person to say: 'Really? Do you feel like that? I feel*

***"(...) it keeps me humble because it reminds me that if I am trying to do this by myself; without God, I am sunk."***

*like that too.' It gives me one of those vital connections."*

*"I don't think God wastes anything. I don't think He imposes things on us which are cruel but the things that do happen to us, He doesn't waste.*

*"To be able to bring those things out, when the time is right and enable someone else to talk because they feel a connection is one of the most valuable things I can do."*

## Counties Evangelist, Colin Johnson, explains how his experience of one-to-one evangelism has shaped his ministry – enabling him to share the Gospel in a more holistic and biblically focused way.

He was angry. I could see the look on his face as he approached my market stall. He said: *"Religion causes all the problems and pain in the world!"* I listened as he poured out his frustration and why he didn't believe. Then I found myself sharing about some of the personal tragedy I'd experienced in my life and how I still believed.

His attitude shifted. He became open and started talking about the loss of his sister through cancer and the hurt he felt.

Later as he left, he said:

"You won't believe this, but I have a small Bible in my bedside drawer I haven't looked at in years. I'm going to get that out tonight". I smiled.



Conversations like this have changed me and the way I see people and how to reach them through evangelism. I have moved away from a simple presentation of the Gospel to as many people as possible, to going out into the local community to build relationships through listening, caring, and sharing my faith.

Let me introduce myself. I am married with three adult children and three granddaughters. My commitment to Christ began 40 years ago and most of that time I have been involved in evangelism. I have experience as a Baptist minister, a Christian counsellor, founding the first Neighbourhood Chaplains' team (and pilot for the national scheme), and many years of one-to-one evangelism in different settings (including market stall outreach and community door to door visiting).

Over the years I have come to see how an evangelist can (perhaps should) be pastoral. A good listener, with empathy and compassion. Can we be like Jesus who saw people as *"harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd"* Matthew 9:36.

This means engaging with questions like: What's wrong with me? What's wrong with my relationships? How can I stop worrying? How do I handle a difficult boss?

This has certainly been my experience. As a young Christian I started working in student evangelism and became friendly with a 'Lord of the Rings' fan. One day when I called round to see him, I found him very depressed, but I felt ill equipped and unsure if and how to help. My usual practice of reading a Gospel tract, or some relevant Bible verses was not going to help. What could I do?

*Nowadays, I show care through listening, befriending, and offering prayer.*

This began my search for a more holistic way of witnessing, and I believe a more Biblical one! Nowadays, I show care through listening, befriending, and offering prayer. I would also look to find common ground and share how God has helped me through difficult times. With this particular person I would now talk about the spiritual themes in the 'Lord of the Rings' and relate them to Christianity.

Everyone we meet is somewhere on the journey towards or away from faith in Christ. A helpful framework to understand this is 'The Five Thresholds' from Everts & Shaupp. Understanding what threshold is relevant really helps us to communicate the Gospel in a meaningful way, otherwise we can just be speaking without them hearing.

Overcoming distrust is the first threshold and where some people get stuck. My conversation with Mr Angry at the market stall showed me how I could build trust and get beyond the first impressions.

*As well as listening, questions are important. As we read the Gospels, we see how many times Jesus asked questions and often they were in response to the questions others asked him.*

I could have been defensive and given a lot of reasons to defend religion, but instead I listened and when the opportunity arose, I shared my experience of pain and loss. What is really going on in the emotional heartland of a person is usually very different from what they say.

One of the key evangelism verses is 1 Peter 3:15:

*"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect".*

I used to think this was an instruction to use the apologetics I had learnt on various training course. The 'gentleness and respect' part I saw as something of an afterthought. It was easy to forget that Peter was

transformed not just by what he had heard but through the experience of receiving love. He had been the one who let down Jesus and was restored because of God's incredible unconditional love and mercy.

Jesus didn't call him as a preacher but said: "Feed my sheep" John 21:17. Peter learnt from this and encouraged the elders to be caring shepherds who served others (1 Peter 5:2). Glen Scrivener\* writes that Peter was: "recommissioned as a pastoral preacher". How can we be the same?

As well as listening, questions are important. As we read the Gospels, we see how many times Jesus asked questions and often they were in response to the questions others asked him. Doing this can change the whole dynamic of a situation.

I remember years ago when I was out calling on some houses for the first time (I had previously posted a letter explaining I was from the church and calling to get to know folk in the community, offer support etc). At one door a big man in his thirties answered and said accusingly: "What are you doing?"

I told him who I was and asked him why he was concerned. It took a couple more questions and a calm voice to find out that some fraudsters had been operating door to door in the area. He was a concerned neighbour and looking out for the elderly and vulnerable. I commended

him for this, and he was happy, and we parted on good terms.

Being challenged like this is very rare, only one or two times in my last 15 years of community visiting. I remember wondering at that point if I should continue calling or give up for the day but felt an inner voice say: "keep going".

*Pastoral evangelism is about having a heart for other people. Caring for their needs and agenda. Being prepared to listen well, reflect on what is said and a willingness to learn.*

The next call was brilliant. I was asked in for a cup of tea and the person said he had been waiting for my call. He was disabled, lonely and isolated. We became friends and I called regularly to see him for some time offering prayer and Bible study.

Pastoral evangelism is about having a heart for other people. Caring for their needs and agenda. Being prepared to listen well, reflect on what is said and a willingness to learn. Looking for where God is already working in that person's

life and encouraging that part of them. It is so more satisfying to do outreach like this in preference to the old 'hit and run' evangelism that is still done by some.

**Colin is happy to respond to anyone who could do with more help or encouragement in this area.**

Email: [colin@hopeonthestreet.org.uk](mailto:colin@hopeonthestreet.org.uk)

\* [thegospelcoalition.org/article/evangelism-and-pastoral-care-best-of-friends/](https://thegospelcoalition.org/article/evangelism-and-pastoral-care-best-of-friends/)



# JUST A MINUTE

WITH  
JEAN CAMPBELL



## How did you become a Christian?

I became a Christian through learning about Jesus, which was preached in a church in Scotland when I was a young teenager.

My parents were members of this church, and I was encouraged to attend the services and the youth group.

## How did you get involved in Counties?

In 1983, I moved with my family (my husband and two children) from Cornwall, where we had been full time Christian workers, to Dorset.

We accepted an invitation to plant a church and we joined Counties at that time.

## What does being part of the Counties family mean to you?

Counties has given me wonderful fellowship and encouragement over the years. It has been good to work alongside people with different ministries but the same aim.

## What's your favourite memory of time with Counties?

I have happy memories of annual Counties rallies held in several venues across England, such as Westminster Central Hall, the City Temple, at Holborn Viaduct and Aldershot. It was great to meet with so many people, enjoy fellowship and hear about the greatness of God.

## What's your favourite Bible verse and why?

A phrase from 1 Samuel 2: 30

*"Those who honour me, I will honour."*

I have proved this promise on my Christian journey.

What a promise! Praise the Lord!

# YOUR LOCAL EVANGELISTS

## NORTH OF ENGLAND

Julian & Ella Gutteridge  
Martin & Angie Korchinsky  
Lee & Lesley Marsland  
Matt & Nicola Rich  
Rob & Sarah Watson  
Phyllis Jenkins (Senior)

## MIDLANDS

Jordan & Lacy Armstrong (CP)  
David & Lindsey Brown  
Tim & Katrina Cracknell  
Andy & Isobel Hodson  
Paul & Vanessa Willmott  
Roger & Hazel Chilvers (Seniors)  
Ivor & Angela Cooper (Seniors)  
Bob & Rita Telford (Seniors)

## SOUTH EAST

Charles & Elizabeth Addoco  
Shaun & Livi Almond (AE)  
Will & Lynne Andrews  
Tim & Joy Ayrton  
Mark & Amanda Bingham  
John Hardwick  
Kim & Jo Hobbs  
Tony & Ruth Hood  
Colin & Linda Johnson  
Caleb & Adanesh Mathewos  
Andrew & Rachel Mugford  
Madelene Bathgate (Senior)  
Lionel Clargo (Senior)  
Victor Jack (Senior)  
Andy & Miriam Jelfs (Seniors)  
John & Jane Martin (Seniors)

AE – Associate Evangelist  
ETP – Evangelists' Training Programme  
CP – Church Planter

Betty Saunders (Senior)  
Gladys Whittern (Senior)

## SOUTH WEST

Jacque & Tim Bodman  
Steve Ellacott (AE)  
Mike & Su Stange  
David & Katie Symons  
Jean Campbell (Senior)

## SOUTH CENTRAL

Jonathan & Heather Brain  
Ian & Sally Carr  
Gordon & Penny Curley  
Steve & Dawn Loader  
Ray Dadswell (Senior)  
Wendy Iliffe (Senior)  
Stephen & Jean Gillham (Seniors)

## WALES

Clive & Fiona Cornish  
Paul & Laura Davies  
Phil & Sheila Davies  
Janet Hawking (AE)  
Mike & Jan Thomas (AE)  
Steve & Gwyn Treseder (AE)  
Grace Anderson (Senior)

## EVANGELIST TRAINING PROGRAMME

Peter & Victoria Barker  
Steve & Debra Cowles  
Alex & Beth Symons  
Stevie & Natalie Walker

## PARTNER WITH US AND THOSE WHO LIVE BY FAITH

### SUBSCRIBE

Please send me:

- Ignite Magazine and Praise & Prayer diary by post (please fill in address)  
 Monthly newsletter by email

### MY DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Your details will be kept on our database and may be shared with a local Counties Evangelist, but with no other persons or organisations.

- Please remove me from your mailing list

### MY GIFT

I would like to partner with Counties. Please find enclosed my/our gift of

£

(please make cheques payable to Counties)

To give online by debit or credit card visit [countiesuk.org](http://countiesuk.org)

### Gift Aid

- This is a Gift-Aid donation (We will send you a gift-aid declaration, if you have not already completed one).  
 I would like to set up a regular standing order.

Your feedback is always appreciated.

### THANK YOU

# A-Z

of Bible characters



Are you a church, youth, or small group leader?

How about starting a series on characters from the Bible?

Why not use our free video resource,

## 'The A-Z of Bible characters in 60 seconds'?

Every month there are new characters like Adam, Felix, Hosea, and Jesus – to kick off your discussion.

Download them free from **YouTube:**  
[youtube.com/c/CountiesConnect](https://youtube.com/c/CountiesConnect)

