



## Pastor's Page

### A Lasting Partnership



I woke early on my big day nervous and excited about all that lay ahead. As I scurried about checking the guest list and checking that my suit was still in fashion (this was a few years ago!) I told myself “There’s no turning back now boy in just a few hours time you’ll be making your public vows of commitment and entering into a life-changing relationship.” I refer, not to my wedding day (you thought you’d missed something there didn’t you?) but to my induction service 6 years ago here at Selly Park. Yes folks six years ago to this very day (Sunday 1 October 2000) I became your Pastor (and you thought I was only coming for three!) Today as I begin my seventh year as minister of this church I want to reflect on God’s calling on my life and our partnership together in the gospel.

**Partnership with a Past.** My first sermon in “situ” was Philippians 1:1-11. In this opening passage as Paul addresses the church at Philippi he refers to their “Partnership in the Gospel”. (v5) This relationship is one with a history. Paul had planted this church 11 or 12 years earlier starting with the conversion of Lydia a cloth dealer from Thyatira (Acts 16:11-15) The church met in her home and they had supported Paul ever since. He for his part had a great affection for these brother and sisters in Christ praying for them regularly (v3,7) We too have a ‘partnership with a past’. For six years we have been serving God together here in the Selly Park area. We haven’t always got it right, but the Lord has been gracious. We have seen many new people coming into the church, quite a few leave, and others going out into specific Christian service. We have also witnessed a few people coming to faith in Jesus. So as we look back we have a lot of things for which to thank the Lord.

**Partnership with a Purpose.** I believe that God has brought us together in order to use our combined gifts and personalities to extend his kingdom. In other words he wants to use this unique partnership as a witness to him in the area, as we obey his great commission. It’s a partnership in the gospel. I remember saying at my induction service that if I didn’t believe God had called me to this task I wouldn’t be here today I’d be on the terraces at Old Trafford!!! Considering God’s call I felt inadequate then and still do today. But as Paul reasoned, “when I am weak then I am strong” as he discovered God’s strength in his weakness. Hudson Taylor said “God’s work done in God’s way, will never lack God’s supply”. So let’s continue to do His work in this partnership in the Gospel

**Partnership with a Promise.** “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus”. There’s an old song that says;

*He didn't bring us this far just to leave us  
He didn't teach us to swim to let us drown  
He didn't build his home in us to move away  
He didn't lift us up, to let us down.*

Let’s be thankful for the past, obedient in the present and excited about the future.

1<sup>st</sup> October 2006