



## Pastor's Page

### Thoughts on the Nought-ies

The big question was; where should I celebrate such a momentous occasion? London seemed a good choice but since most of my family were in the north I decided on Lancaster. And so it came to pass that in a small Anglican chapel on a chilly December night I witnessed the dawn of the new millennium. And now ten years on I'm wondering where the time's gone. And yes folks this will be the last Pastors Page of this decade (Hoorah!) So on this equally momentous occasion I thought I'd do a quick review of the 'noughties'

**Prophecy** – There was a lot of hysteria in late 1999 based on a predicted computer problem called the millennium bug. The theory was that computers were not programmed to recognize the number 00 and would assume that it was the year 1900 instead of 2000. I remember one comedian around the time saying; "I believe in all that millennium bug stuff now – yesterday I received my calling up papers – for the Boer war!!" However one of the most dramatic scenarios prophesised was that of aeroplanes dropping out of the sky at 12.01 on New Year's Day!! (Not a great start to the New Year!) And somewhere in all of this a small number of Christians were predicting the Lord's second coming. Well in case you're too young to remember neither of these things happened and apart from spectacular fireworks in London, Sydney and Washington (and my sister's back garden!) the world seemed to carry on in the same old way.

**Society** – Alongside the amazing advances in technology over the past ten years especially the development of the internet our world seems to have been dominated by two twin issues - Global warming and Global terrorism. The awful events on September 11 2001 in New York will be remembered forever more. The response of the American and British governments was to declare war on terrorism resulting in, amongst other strategies, conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan. At the same time natural catastrophes like the awful tsunami in the Indian Ocean on Boxing day 2004 killing around 230,000 people in 11 countries brought environmental issues to the fore. With Al Gore's controversial film 'An Inconvenient Truth' raising the profile of the Global Warming subject, we have all become much 'greener' and more aware of how beautiful yet fragile this planet is.

**Personally** – I've been a Baptist minister now for 10 years (I hope to get the hang of it soon) I've been privileged to see people coming to faith, people growing in the faith and people also struggling with their faith. Visits to West Africa in 2003 and East India in 2008 have given me powerful insights into the spread of the gospel in other parts of the world. Over these ten years I've married some people I've baptised some and I've buried some. And even this week as I sat in the quiet of a hospital unit with a lady I know well and her brother who had unexpectedly and suddenly died – I recognised afresh how fleeting and precious life is.

And so as we enter a new decade let's thank God for 'the years that his love has kept and guided us' and seek to live each new moment for him. And in the words of the old philosopher let's make sure that we spend life on something that will outlast it! Have a great Christmas and God willing I'll write again in 2010.

20<sup>th</sup> December 2009