



Jamie Treadwell: Brother, Youth Worker, and Artist

It was mid August 1997, high summer in England, but it had been raining all week; in fact 40 days and 40 nights was becoming a real possibility. Two hundred damp conference attendees were of one mind, never to come to Exeter for a conference again. That night was the key youth event, the beach BBQ. BBQs in the rain are normal in England, but the thought of doing one that night sapped our energies, and cancellation seemed inevitable. But for Jamie this wasn't an option. With characteristic enthusiasm, faith and boldness, he rallied the leaders, encouraged the youth, and set us off on an early evening adventure to remember, culminating in a spontaneous travelling amusement park, what in England is known as a fun fair, temporarily closed due to lack of business during the rain! For Jamie, a challenge is but one more step along what he would describe as "the adventure of a God-oriented life".



Originating from Grosse Ile, Michigan, Jamie is one of the most variedly gifted men I know. Majoring in fine arts and business at the University of Michigan, he came to London in 1986 to develop local youth work, before moving to Belfast in 1989 where some years later he co-founded Youth Initiatives, one of the most successful cross-community youth works in Northern Ireland. Back in London since 2001, Jamie now heads up international youth work for the Sword of the Spirit in Europe and the Middle East. Although his main job is explicitly in other fields, art remains an integral part of his life, be it as active painter in his spare time and encourager of Christian artists, or as one whose passion is to see art – in the broadest sense of the word – expressed in day to day life and culture. At a conference holiday for 400 two years ago, Jamie described how art

Our vision is to inspire and equip a new generation to live Christian community

was the theme he used to design the event: "Most individuals drop art at an early age, often labelled as 'non-artists' ...but everyone has a way to express the artist inside of them," he insists. Art, the creative gift, is a way of life, almost a way of doing business, for him. Listening to him speak about his youth work you can hear echoes of it, sometimes explicit, but always implicit, with the idea 'transformation' a connecting theme. He quoted Romans 12 where it says "do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" as a guiding principle behind the discipleship households he has been developing over the last year. "Our vision is to inspire and equip a new generation to live Christian community," he says. His work seems to be achieving this. The Sword of the Spirit European summer youth conference in Germany took the theme "living sacrificially," and the impact can be judged by the proliferation of interest in "being serious about discipleship," he now sees amongst those who came.

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Beloved family and friends,

Warm Christmas greetings to all of you from The Servants of the Word! May the One who has come and dwelt among us as the Word made flesh come and dwell richly in your hearts and in your homes in this holy season and throughout the coming new year.

As the year 2005 comes to its close, we who are Servants of the Word-made-flesh find ourselves once again filled with awe and gratitude to the Lord for His abundant grace in our lives, and for His continued blessing upon our undertakings. We have experienced His presence among us and within us, and words cannot express the depth of our joy and thanksgiving to Him for whom we live. We are also immensely grateful for the blessing that you are for us! May our Incarnate Lord overwhelm you with His love! ▲

May the Word made flesh dwell richly in your hearts

In Christ, the Word become flesh,

John Keating

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Jamie Treadwell speaking to LeWeekend participants at a recent conference in Volkenroda, Germany

Travel is inevitable for someone with international responsibilities. Much as he clearly loves it, Jamie says that 31 Lynton Road, the brothers’ home in London, is really home. It is here that he not only plans and paints, but that he finds stability, in relationships with other brothers, and in prayer. For all his gifts at heart his identity is in the call the Lord has given him as a brother in The Servants of the Word. In his words, “the strong love God put into my heart, and the desire He gave me to serve the church, all come together in my life as a Servant of the Word.” ▲

–Andy Pettman

Prime Minister of Ireland Visits Youth Initiatives

On November 3rd, 2005, the Taoiseach (Prime minister of the Republic of Ireland) Bertie Ahern and Pat Colgan, a Chief Executive in European Union social funding, visited Youth Initiatives' (YI) cross-community project in Belfast.

The purpose of the Taoiseach's recent visit was to publicize successful European-funded peace and reconciliation projects with the aim of winning future European funding for similar projects.

A performance by Creative Crosslinks, one of Youth Initiatives' seven youth work projects, was the center of attention for the Prime Minister's West Belfast visit. Creative Crosslinks brings together Protestant and Catholic young people from Belfast's separated pro-British and pro-Irish communities through creative arts modules and cross-community residentials culminating in annual public performances. YI staff worker Kathy Willis is the lead coordinator and constant inspiration behind the project involving 70 young people, mostly from disadvantaged areas of Belfast.

The brothers are quick to give credit to the Lord as well as many other talented people who have joined them in the work of YI

During his visit to the Youth Initiatives' Project Center, Mr Ahern commented on the wide recognition that YI has received for its successful peace and reconciliation work with disadvantaged youth.

Since the beginning of Youth Initiatives, Servants of the Word brothers have played an important role in its founding, development and running, taking YI from modest beginnings to become a recognized catalyst in Northern Ireland youth work and beyond. Springing from a series of outreach missions organized by members of Charis community and Servants of the Word brothers, founders Jamie Treadwell and Ed Conlin established Youth Initiatives as a charitable trust. Youth Initiatives has specialized in innovative faith and social development youth work projects since 1991. The brothers are quick to give credit to the Lord for the recognition and impact on young people that the work is having as well as the many other talented people who have joined with them in the work of YI.

Following Servants of the Word brothers Jamie Treadwell and Mike Shaughnessy, Doug Smith is now the director of YI. Tony O'Neill currently works in project development and Servant of the Word brothers Richard Perry and Dave Quintana help to govern YI as Trustees. ▲



–Doug Smith

Doug Smith (center) speaks with the Taoiseach Bertie Ahern during his recent visit to YI

Short-term Household a Reality in Honduras

Twelve men representing four countries recently assembled for a nine-day, Servants of the Word household in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Seven affiliates from Honduras, two from Nicaragua, two from Mexico and one from the United States enthusiastically joined forces to experience first hand the benefits of living our Servants of the Word household life, enhancing our spiritual lives, and serving the poor together.

With a surging number of young men becoming affiliated with our life, we have attempted to address the logistical challenge of introducing zealous young men to household life in locations where we lack resources to establish long-term households. To meet this challenge, regional elder David Mijares has successfully designed short-term household environments featuring opportunities for prayer, Bible study, fellowship, and service.

Spirits were continually high just to be able to be together for this international and multi-cultural training experience

One can hardly say that this most recent grouping of affiliates needed much encouragement. Enthusiastically, they embraced the disciplines of our daily life finding much joy and satisfaction in pursuing a life of holiness beginning each day with prayer and scripture study and rounding out the day with recreational times and service. Despite the presence of a low grade hurricane during much of the time together, spirits were continually high just to be able to be together for this international and multi-cultural training experience.

Our group spent several afternoons serving in a nearby home for abandoned or otherwise disadvantaged children just outside the city of El Progreso where we were able to spend time playing soccer and offering evangelistic presentations. Activities in the home culminated the last evening with a pizza and ice cream dinner much to the delight and excitement of the 45 children present. The kitchen staff were delighted as well as we gave them a break from their cooking responsibilities. No one went to bed lethargic, hungry or unappreciative of new friendships that evening while eagerly awaiting the arrival of two international, high school mission teams next summer.



Short-term household members on a day outing at Lago Yahoia located between San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Plans are already being made for gathering again next year for our second short-term household in Honduras. If God builds the house, we will not labor in vain. 🏠

-Mike Kramer

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP

The Servants of the Word gets its support through the financial earnings of the brothers as well as by donations from our benefactors. Many of our brothers work for sacrificial wages or for no pay at all. Please consider if you can become a financial sponsor of The Servants of the Word. Your prayers and support are appreciated in our work with young people and our community development work.

THE SERVANTS OF THE WORD

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