

# libraryoflives

The Pioneer Journal – Issue 14



## SPIRIT OF THE MILLENNIUM

How Pioneer plunged into the uncharted waters of the 21st century

4

### NETWORK NEWS

Some of the latest happenings from across Pioneer

10

### PRAY FOR PRESIDENT

Wayne Drain shares his perspectives on Barack Obama

12

### SERVING THE WIDER CHURCH

Steve Clifford's unique opportunity to help shape the future

PIONEER



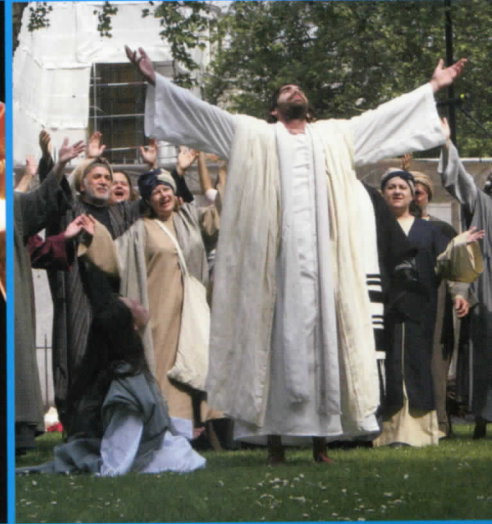
**Pentecost  
Festival  
.co.uk\***

## **Discover the big story...**

26th - 31st May 2009 - Central London

Debate and Discussion on current issues with MP's • Music from classical to rock  
• Prophetic teaching and prayer • Climate Change with leading scientists • Urban  
music night • Men's & Women's events • Comedy • Cabaret • Movie screening  
and Main stage events at Leicester Square • Salsa Night • Art Exhibitions • Extreme  
sports events • Open air presentations • Justice Campaigns

Order your sneak preview programme now at  
[www.pentecostfestival.co.uk](http://www.pentecostfestival.co.uk)





## Seasons change

Welcome to my last regular editorial. Some readers – who may not have picked up the signals – might well be asking the question, 'Why?'

Let me explain. For some time, I've felt Pioneer needs a different kind of leadership into the 21st century. I have led Pioneer with an excellent team since the early 80s. In those formative years we started out as a network of churches, training programmes and travelling ministries/influencers – including people like John and Christine Noble, Ishmael, Joe King, Godfrey Birtill, Steve Clifford, Jeff Lucas, Patrick Dixon, Delirious?, Sue Rinaldi, Caroline Bonnett, Linda Harding and Noel Richards.

By design and default, we emerged into a network of teams, providing better support for churches and ministries, encouraging decentralised innovation and creativity. That needs a different style to the leadership I've provided for 25 years. Enter Billy and Caroline Kennedy, at the invitation of the National Churches Forum and myself.

Billy and Caroline lead New Community, a 1,000-strong multi-congregational church in Southampton. They helped us through transition, and God knit our hearts together. They're not from Pioneer – but like us, they've pioneered. Alongside personal discussions with Billy and Caroline, advisors and myself, the National Churches Forum have made a vital contribution to our journey together. We've also kept key church leaders and travelling ministries/influencers informed.

This process was highlighted at the Pioneer Leadership Conference 2008, and has progressed with Billy and Caroline writing editorials in this journal. That pathway will conclude when I hand over responsibility of the Pioneer Trust and ministries at *Back To The Future* – the next leaders' conference at the end of February. Inevitably, some have asked another important question, 'What will you do now?'

I'll continue with the National Churches Forum. I will attend and, when needed, participate in the leaders' conference. For a while I'll continue to be involved with Pioneer communications – and represent Pioneer at the Evangelical Alliance, (huge congratulations to Steve Clifford by the way!) Charismatic Evangelical Round Table, media organisations and some overseas engagements. I'm reminded of Arthur William O'Shaughnessy's words: *'For each age is a dream that is dying, or one that is coming to birth'*. So as one season passes and another emerges – for Pioneer, Anona and myself – how do I *really* feel?

Great, thank you!

I feel supported, respected, looked after and unhurried. For the New Churches, this succession appears to be a 'first'. Once again, Pioneer lives up to its name.

Lastly, I've enjoyed my work with Clive Price, who has done a brilliant job editing this magazine. Our friendship goes back to the early days, when he reported on the *Banquet* tour. He's assisted in telling our story – to take established pioneers on a journey of gratitude, and inform those who joined more recently.

We occupy a small corner of God's purposes. Yet we join with all who pray, 'Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth – just as it is in heaven'.

Gerald Coates  
Executive Editor



## Contents



**lifeworks** ..... page 4&5  
The latest news from around the network



**lifechangers** ..... page 6-9  
Gerald Coates paints an honest picture of Pioneer's opening days of the 21st century



**lifesavers** ..... page 10&11  
A balanced and biblical approach to the US election from Wayne Drain



**lifetimes** ..... page 12  
A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Steve Clifford to help boost Britain's evangelical community

PIONEER

libraryoflives is the official journal of the Pioneer network of churches and ministries. Material is protected by copyright. No content may be reproduced without permission from Pioneer.

**Executive Editor:** Gerald Coates

**Editor:** Clive Price

**Design and Print:**  
Verité CM Ltd,  
Worthing,  
West Sussex BN12 4BG

**Publisher:**  
Pioneer Trust,  
PO Box 357  
Leatherhead KT22 2ED

**tel:** 01372 459413  
**e-mail:** admin@pioneer.org.uk  
**web:** www.pioneer.org.uk

Pioneer is a registered charity (no 327160) and a member of the Evangelical Alliance.

Front cover photo of Marsham Street meeting autumn 2008, taken by Benedict Parsons



# HOPE IS THE HOOK

What are the hopes of such people as Sir Cliff Richard, Bobby Ball, Baroness Cox, Gerald Coates, Tom Lister and Joel Edwards?

That is the theme explored in a new selection of stories compiled by Andrew Swift from River Church, Maidenhead, which is part of the Pioneer network.

It was in April 2007 that this 33-year-old businessman – and surfer – felt called to write a book called *My Reason for Hope*.

'For three nights in a row, God spoke to me in a dream,' he said.

'If you're anything like me, it takes hearing something three times before it actually sinks in!'

Through his recurring dream, Andrew believed he was being directed to gather together short stories by Christians from different walks of life. So he pursued the idea in reality.

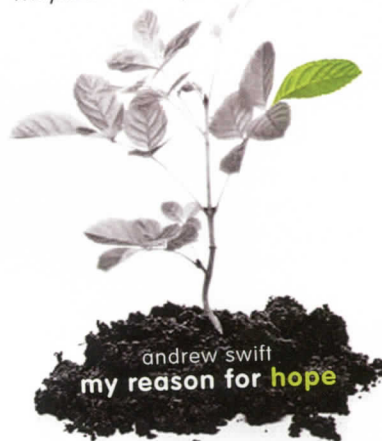
Some of the highlights of pulling the stories together included visiting Lord Alton in the Houses of Parliament, receiving a late-night phone call from *Big Brother's* Cameron Stout – 'and having Anne Widdecombe call me and my not realising it was her!'

And what is the author's own hope for his book?

'My prayer is that those who already know Jesus will be inspired by these stories to carry on "running the race";' he said, 'and that those who don't yet know Jesus will discover what they

have been missing out on – the best and only true source of hope, for this life and the next.'

For more information, visit [www.myreasonforhope.com](http://www.myreasonforhope.com). The book is available from the Pioneer website through Kevin Mayhew – [www.pioneer.org.uk](http://www.pioneer.org.uk).



# Gospel is the goal

A Pioneer congregation in Surrey – Molesey Community Church – is encouraging other Christians to use football in evangelism.

Their own club chairman Mark Blythe has recently written a book about their experiences and help others kick off their own football ministry. *Football 2 Football Ministry 3* is packed with tips, ideas and disasters to help churches develop successful outreach programmes.

**Soccer Strategy:**  
Author Mark Blythe (left) with ex England International Lee Sharpe – supporting football ministry Ambassadors in Sport – and footballing son Alex Blythe

'If you have a passion for football and Jesus, then combine the two to reach like-minded folks in your community with the good news,' said Mark. 'Our aim is to blur the boundaries between church and community, but at the same time be clear and ready to answer any questions generated by the way we play and act.'

'Our club motto is, "play the way you want the opposition to" – translated into football speak from Luke 6:31!' The book is available from [www.veriteshop.co.uk](http://www.veriteshop.co.uk).



# Sidcup scoops the honours

Sidcup-based *New Generation* – who are part of the Pioneer network – have scooped some local awards for their huge summer festival *Lark In The Park*.

For Bexley Council's *Environmental Challenge 2008*, they took third place overall and became winners in the recycling category. The honour was in recognition of their work in the community and with the Bexley Council Park Rangers.

A major feature on the festival appeared in the previous edition of *Library Of Lives* – and the event has also been covered in their local media.

# Castle view

About 100 leaders converged recently on Windsor Castle for the latest bi-annual charismatic evangelical Round Table.

Hosted by Gerald Coates and Christen Forster, the event drew such participants as Bill Johnson, John and Carol Arnott and Che Ahn.

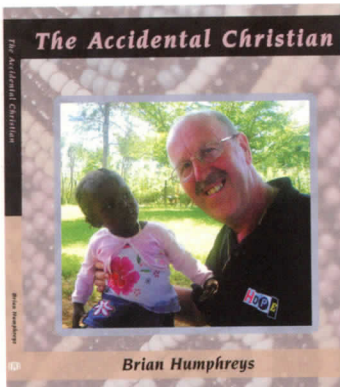
'The venue operates under the "Chatham Rules",' said Gerald, 'securing confidentiality of content and discussions. But suffice to say, it was a significant time of prayer for the nation.'



## THE NEW LIFE OF BRIAN

Church members from a sleepy Somerset village are sounding a wake-up call to the wider Christian community – to rush to the aid of the world's poor.

They belong to a small Pioneer church at St Georges. And one of them in particular – by his own admission a typical 'Mr Average' – is leading the charge.



At age 57, Brian Humphreys was drawn into joining 11 people from St Georges Community Church on their 2006 aid mission to install a water supply in the village of Ulumbi. He ended up writing a book about it.

'I visited Kenya to help people worse off than me, but they helped me more than they'll ever know,' said Brian, the author of *The Accidental Christian*. 'I soon realised that, although they had little or no possessions, they were richer than me – because they had faith in God.'

Brian's book covers three aid missions to Kenya, during which he grappled with 'a fledgling faith, my own insecurities and extreme poverty as I strove to help the poor'. In June 2008, he was baptised in the River Yala in front of more than 100 singing Kenyan men, women and children.

'I want to thank Pioneer for supporting all churches big and small,' said Brian, 'and my story just goes to show that, even at 57, you're never too old to be gloriously used by God.' (Visit [www.brianhumphreys.co.uk](http://www.brianhumphreys.co.uk))

## Making mission work

People from across the Pioneer network have been playing a key role in promoting an interactive course on world mission.

In 2001 Pioneer enabled Linda Harding to go to the Philippines to become a trainer for *Kairos*, and she is now part of the international team. Several pioneer churches are using the course in their discipleship and mission training.

DNA and 24/7 are finding *Kairos* an effective tool in their programmes. Other facilitators – many of them from Pioneer churches – are now involved in running the course in Germany, Thailand, and South Africa.

Jan and Duncan Weir of the former Pioneer People Farnham are involved with Brazilians here and in Brazil. They are also using the Portuguese translation of *Kairos* to train Brazilians in several cities.

The course involves 40 hours of learning – looking at history, strategy, culture, and teamwork aspects of global mission. *Kairos* uses DVDs, worksheets, small groups, lectures, activities and worship. For further information, go to – [www.kairoscourse.org.uk](http://www.kairoscourse.org.uk).

## BELFAST WELCOMES LEE AND BAZ

After years writing, researching and addressing small events and men's groups, 2008 became a big year for Pioneer speakers Lee Jackson and Baz Gascoyne.

'We were at the Christian Vision for Men (CVM) national conference, which was great,' said Lee, 'but the biggest stage by far was *The Mandate* in Belfast. We had an opportunity to speak to 3,500 men in the Odyssey Arena.'

One of Europe's biggest men's conferences, *The Mandate* became a golden opportunity for Pioneer's popular duo. 'And we really went for it,' said Lee, 'doing two seminars in the afternoon on reaching blokes, then we had 20 minutes to speak to the whole conference.'

They talked about the journey writing their book *Cut To The Chase*. 'We shared from our heart, made people laugh – and challenged a few, too,' Lee added. Another Pioneer speaker, Jeff Lucas, will be speaking at *The Mandate* this year.



DEEP SOUNDS: Celtic-style worship is a hallmark of *The Mandate*. (Photo: Clive Price)

REACHING BLOKES: *The Mandate* committee member Norman Cameron (left) interviews Lee Jackson (centre) and Baz Gascoyne (right) (Photo: Clive Price)





# spirit of the millennium

The dawn of a new age brought pain and promise to Pioneer. In the final instalment of his brief history of the movement, Gerald Coates paints an honest picture of the opening days of the 21st century

A fresh breeze began to blow across the charismatic movement. We were approaching a new millennium. Despite doomsayer warnings about the Y2K bug, many within Pioneer were being infected by a vision of hope and adventure.

A bunch of young people in Chichester caught the crazy notion of trying to pray for a whole month. They couldn't stop. And just as the new century dawned, what became known as 24-7 Prayer was born. It started within Pioneer, but was quickly adopted by other churches and Christian organisations, who made it their own.

From those humble beginnings, the movement has since spread into many nations, denominations and age groups. Hundreds of non-stop prayer meetings now link up through the 24-7 website to form a unique chain of intercession.

Unusual prayer initiatives have sprung up in the most unlikely places – including a skate park in Switzerland, a bus in the slums of Delhi, a police station in London, an office in Tulsa, a brewery in Missouri, in student basements and campuses – and even churches!

## Dynamic movement

Around the same time, another group of leaders – from Pioneer and other movements and organisations – became consumed with the idea of reaching students across Britain with the concept of 'cell groups'.

As a result of these talks, a coalition of ministries began to work with the student movement Fusion, to support Christians on campus. Since then, a dynamic network has emerged, making an impact in universities and colleges.

If the 60s and 70s brought personal revolution in small house churches, and the 80s and 90s saw those groups grow into a recognisable movement, then by year 2000 they had started living out their dreams and discoveries in a whole variety of ways.

We were applying much of what we had found back in the 70s. We were bringing old traditions of endless prayer and radical mission into the rapidly changing world of the 21st century. It looked like a heady mix of ancient and modern.

So although life generally was becoming much more privatised with home computers and games consoles, prayer and mission were becoming community-focused. While some were becoming cocooned in their personal audio-visual worlds, others were becoming engaged with their local communities.

Three main views marked the start of the new century. The 'doom and gloom' brigade were saying things were going to get worse. Others said this emerging culture would give the Church new opportunities to engage. Still others felt a simple change of date wouldn't make a single bit of difference.

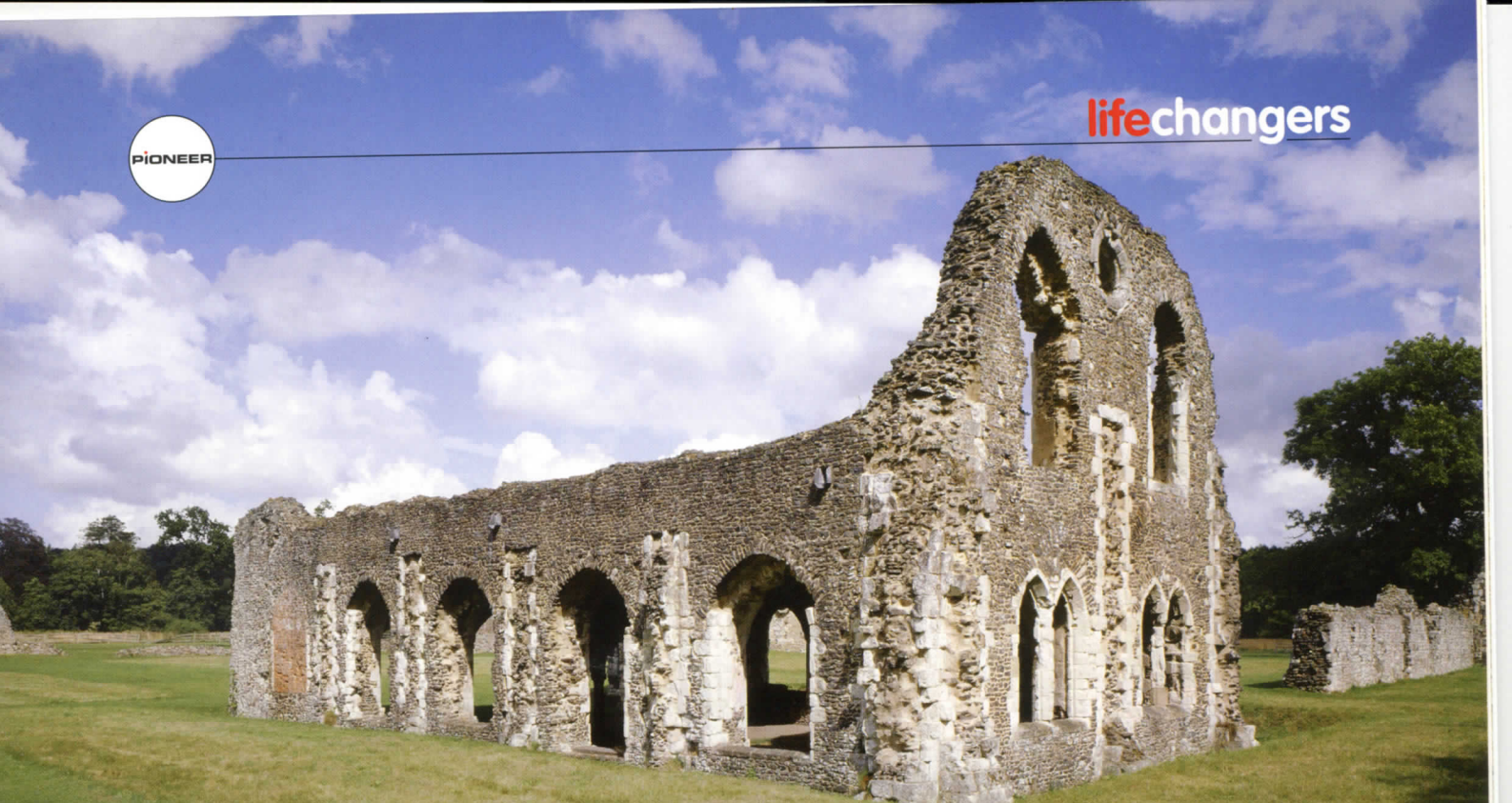
But for the New Churches, the turn of the century brought fresh, strong winds moving through charismatic/pentecostal evangelicalism. The time-shift did mark something quite robust in terms of new expressions of church and mission.

*'Just as the new century dawned, 24-7 Prayer was born'*

KEY ALLIES: At the final March for Jesus in London, in 2000, Gerald Coates confers with (left to right) Lyndon Bowring of CARE, Rob Parsons of Care for the Family and Steve Chalke from Oasis







*POWER BASE: Pioneer guests enjoyed some eventful prayer times at the ruins of Waverley Abbey (Photo: English Heritage)*

We were at Waverley Abbey House when the millennium started. We had moved there just before the turn of the century. Selwyn Hughes, founder of Crusade for World Revival (CWR) – who owned the building – had invited Anona and myself to help them turn it into a prayer and revival centre.

Situated amid a picturesque riverside meadow, Waverley was the first Cistercian abbey to be founded in Britain. Since it was built in 1128, it became a shelter for pilgrims and an infirmary for the sick. When Henry VIII sacked the monasteries, it became a convenient source of local building material.

The stately Waverley Abbey House now dominates the site, but the ruins of the original abbey can still be found next to the River Wey. It's a lovely spot for a picnic – and for prayer. While based at the house, we would often go to the abbey ruins and pray with guests and visitors.

We would stand people on a little plaque where the high altar used to be. Some people were so overcome, they literally couldn't stand – we had to hold them up. Although it hadn't been a wealthy abbey, it was prestigious. Monarchs and bishops would go there to receive prayer and be anointed.

*'Some people were so overcome, they literally couldn't stand'*

The idea was that we would move the Pioneer and March For Jesus offices to Waverley. A guy from Pioneer and Anona actually ran the house with a small team. We lived in the House, and paid a rent for an apartment.

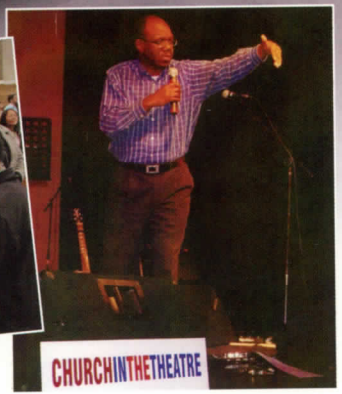
A number of Pioneer initiatives started there – such as Connections, the Making Goodness Fashionable network, mentoring and the Round Table – the last of which still meets at Waverley. A number of Christian leaders meet over a 24-hour period twice a year for updates, prayer, personal support, issues of theology, and controversies.

My long-time friend Noel Richards even recorded an album at Waverley – complete with an orchestra. There was a feeling of optimism that the centre could become a beacon for revival. But it was hard work. We were like the proverbial duck, looking as though we were gracefully gliding on the lake while our little feet were paddling away like mad. So we moved on by the end of 2002.



*MAJOR PLAYERS: Gerald Coates interviews CWR founder Selwyn Hughes at an event in the grounds of Waverley Abbey House*





*FRESH AWAKENINGS: A series of meetings in Westminster, Fire On Marsham Street, ran for 19 weeks in autumn 2008, led by Gerald Coates and team. Hundreds responded to appeals to get closer to God. It was a further sign of how Pioneer works with other networks and churches.*

*SPECIAL GUEST: Outgoing chief of Evangelical Alliance Joel Edwards spoke at Open Heaven, a multi-church gathering led by Gerald Coates and colleagues at The Theatre, Leatherhead. A number of people from within Pioneer have taken part in those meetings.*

**Mother church**

Meanwhile, there were further challenges back at base with our church, Pioneer People. What had started out as five people in our front room in the 70s had now become more than 500 people in a public venue. But with promise comes pain.

Leadership tensions came to a head. And despite wise counsel from friends across the network, it seemed the only way forward was to declare a time of 'jubilee' and allow people to find their own destiny.

Today, I am happy to say, I am privileged to lead *Engage*, a growing group in Leatherhead that includes three generations of believers – from kids to grandparents. They are heavily involved in their community and are committed to worship.

Music is a strong feature of the church, who meet every Sunday morning at Park House in the town centre. We use The Theatre, Leatherhead, for larger celebration events.

A number of people from other parts of the UK – and from overseas – feel they should come alongside us to build something new in this town. It's not easy. The great John Wesley preached his last sermon in Leatherhead and said it was a terrible place. No one can say I ignore a good challenge!

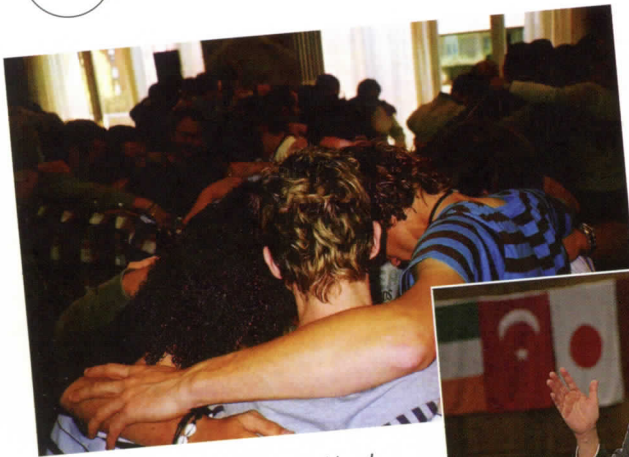
Back on the wider front, to use the father-son analogy, the sons were growing up, and were flexing their muscles. People like John and Christine Noble, Steve Clifford, Dave Day, Linda Harding, Pete Gilbert, Adrian Hawkes, Phil Collins, Dave and Pat Bilbrough, Roger and Margaret Ellis – and many others – wanted to be in the family and wanted to be in the business.

Others wanted to be in the family – they were happy to be organically related – but they didn't particularly want to be in the Pioneer business. Those who remained started to form their own teams and ministries. So Pioneer became a 'network of networks'.

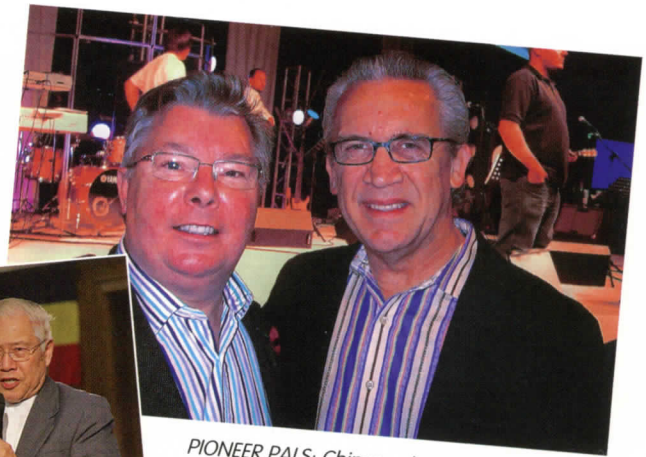


*PRAYER WARRIOR: Pete Greig, who has played a key role in the birth and growth of 24-7, conducts interviews at a Pioneer event*





*MEN IN THE MED: Gerald helped lead prayers at a men's conference in Toledo, Spain, 2007*



*PIONEER PALS: Chinese church leader Wee Hian Chua preaches at Marsham Street (left) and Gerald with speaker and author Bill Johnson (right)*



**State of shock**

Amid all these challenges, the network carried on doing what it had always done – pioneering. More than two years ago, we took the radical step of inviting Billy and Caroline Kennedy from New Community, a church in Southampton, to advise us in becoming more effective as a movement.

I didn't have much contact with Billy and Caroline until they started on this process with us. And it was never with succession in mind. But one day, at the National Churches Forum, it came to me like a 'ray of light' – I needed to pass on the baton to this couple.

They had also been key players on the leadership team of a major charismatic congregation and a regional network that had faced some serious challenges over recent years. So we had a few experiences in common.

Later, a number of us were meeting for dinner in West London. Billy and Caroline came in after us, and jokingly said, 'We've just had this daft discussion that you asked us to lead Pioneer'. They were laughing about it. I said, 'That's interesting...'

Up to that point, there had been no discussion about my succession. The Kennedy's were helping us on a journey, not with a view to leading the network. I think they were in a state of shock when I told them that's exactly what they should be doing – leading Pioneer.

There was promise in involving Billy and Caroline. There was promise in the decision that we would be a network of networks, rather than a network of churches. There was promise in starting a church planting programme. There was promise in carrying out some fresh leadership development.

Some people have asked, 'When you hand over to Billy and Caroline, what are you going to do?' Well, I continue with my ministry in speaking, writing and mentoring. I am pulling a team together to lead a local church in Leatherhead, Surrey. And I will be at major things like Pioneer's National Churches Forum, the annual conference, the Round Table, OFCOM/CRAC, patron/ambassador of Monkton Combe School and so on.

*'The network carried on doing what it had always done – pioneering'*

But as time goes on, the change of leadership will create space. I expect God to fill in that space. From that embryonic vision of doing church in a new way – which a mere handful of us shared in the 70s – a bright new future is emerging for a vast range of New Churches in the 21st century.

Faced with economic meltdown, with many people feeling unsafe in their jobs and major high street players disappearing, plus the security tensions that are felt across the globe, it would be easy to ask the question, what on earth is God doing?

I know Billy and Caroline would join me in asking a different question – what on earth is the Church doing?

For this is our hour.



**Gerald Coates** is founder of the Pioneer movement and Executive Editor of *Library Of Lives*.

*DYNAMIC DUO: Billy Kennedy, who with his wife Caroline will be leading Pioneer*





# Obama and the Church

How should Christians respond to the result of the recent US election? Wayne Drain offers a balanced and biblical approach to Obama

MAIN MAN: Barack Obama, as seen on the cover of his book *The Audacity Of Hope* published by Canongate 2007 ([www.meetatthegate.com](http://www.meetatthegate.com))

'Race or gender was not the issue for me'

It has been an historic presidential election. Whatever your expectations were for the outcome of this election, it's important that you don't put your hope in a man or a party or a government. We put our hope in God. I take encouragement from the wise words of Solomon in the book of Proverbs 21:1 – *'The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases'*.

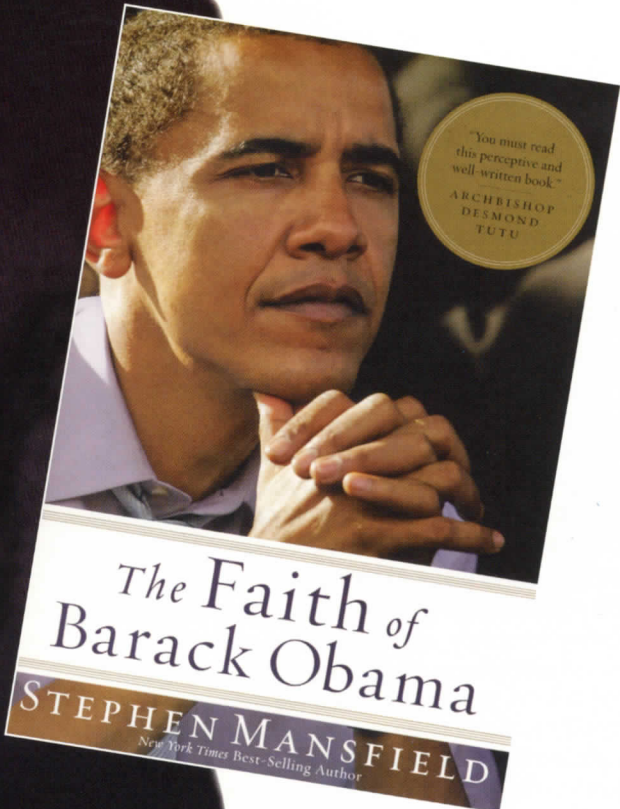
I firmly believe the Lord God still has the whole world in his hands.

I am encouraged about one thing from this election. It was proven that in America it is possible for anyone to become president of our nation, regardless of race or gender.

### Beacon of hope

Just 40 years ago it was inconceivable for a woman or an African American to rise to the top job in our country. A dream was acceptable, but many didn't think that dream could come true in their lifetime.

I rejoice that we broke through that ceiling. Race or gender was not the issue for me in this election. Where the candidates stood on issues important to me was. I'm concerned about the appointment of Supreme Court judges.





I'm concerned about the potential downward spiral in our culture in which life and biblical principles are no longer valued as much as the economy.

Prayer for our country and our leaders to turn to God is more important now than ever. It's not a time for the Church to stick her head in the sand out of fear or anger. She needs to shine brightly like stars in the universe as the only real beacon of hope for mankind.

I have a friend from another part of the country who has been involved in the media and has attended inaugural events, balls and the inauguration itself back in 2004. He sent me a note a couple of days after the election in which he gave a very interesting perspective.

**Godly leaders**

'I think the fate of our nation and our world depends on the Lord, but also on the prayers of godly leaders,' he wrote.

'We have come to a place beyond our anger and opposition to a place of leadership and accepting our prophetic role as the Church. There is a tremendous opportunity before us and I think we must seize it in deep prayer – not only for our nation but also for its president.'

My friend went on to say, 'I for one am more apt to pray that Barack Obama becomes our most successful and godly president – rather than to sit back and wait for him to self destruct, fail and then gloat over it. I would love to see God change his heart and in four years to be shocked at the miracle the Lord has done all because we asked him to! After all, I know that real change is possible'.

*There is a tremendous opportunity before us and I think we must seize it'*

**What the president believes...**

'It came about as a choice and not an epiphany; the questions I had did not magically disappear. But kneeling beneath that cross on the South Side of Chicago, I felt God's Spirit beckoning me. I submitted myself to his will, and dedicated myself to discovering his truth' – Barack Obama, writing in *The Audacity Of Hope* (Canongate 2007).

'While Americans are used to religious insincerity from their political leaders, Obama seems to be sincere in what he proclaims. He embraced religion long before he embraced politics. Indeed, it was his faith that gave him the will to serve in public office, and the worldview of that faith that shaped his understanding of what he would do once he came to power' – Stephen Mansfield, writing in *The Faith Of Barack Obama* (Thomas Nelson, 2008).



**Wayne Drain** is Senior Pastor of Fellowship of Christians Church and heads up a network of churches in Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina called *Pioneer Connect*. Wayne is also a worship leader and songwriter for Kingsway's *Thank You Music* and EMI. He lives in Russellville, Arkansas, with his wife. Wayne and June have three grown children, one grandson and a granddaughter on the way.

*SOCIETY CHIEFS: Wayne and June Drain with civic leaders (From left to right) Former Deputy Chief of the Cherokee Nation Garland Eagle, President of University of Central Arkansas Lu Hardin and Russellville Mayor Tyrone Williamson and his wife*





# Steve to serve the wider church

A familiar face in the Pioneer network has been given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – to help boost Britain's evangelical community

He has brought no-nonsense leadership to some of the UK's most successful grassroots church initiatives. Now he's been given the opportunity to help shape an evangelical future.

Steve Clifford, leader of the *Inspire* network of churches – and a respected player within the Pioneer movement – has been appointed General Director of the Evangelical Alliance.

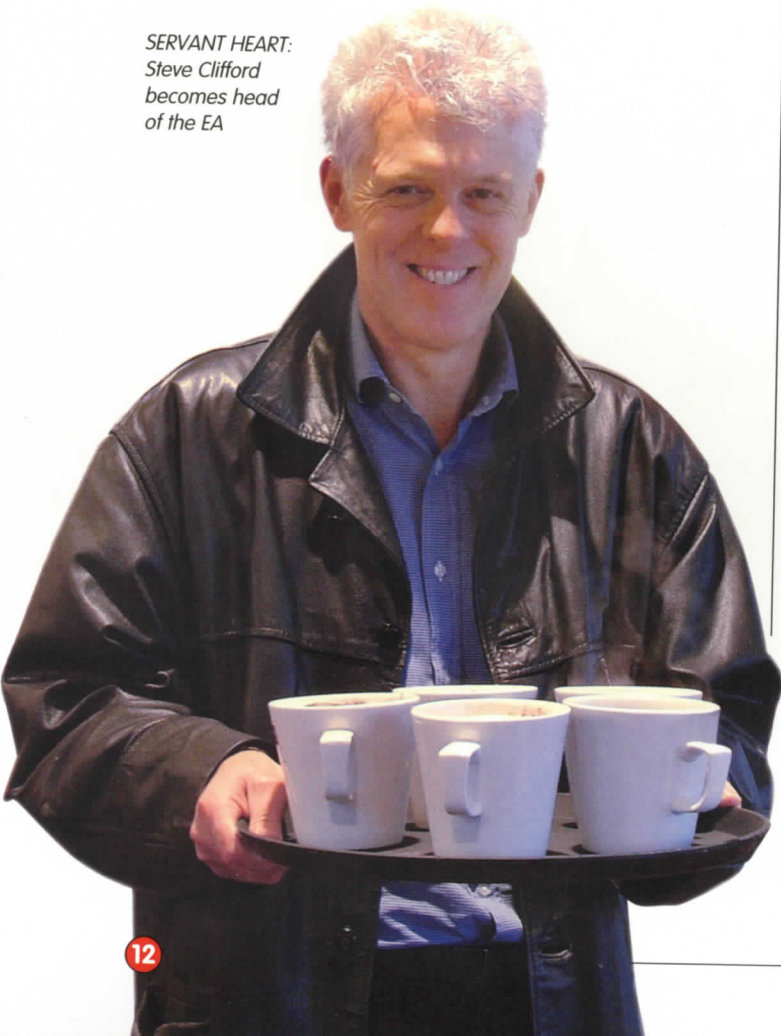
The EA serves a matrix of churches, Christian organisations and ministries. It is an influential body in the media, the Church at large and supports a number of organisations in business, arts, medicine, law, politics and social services.

## Incredible change

Steve hails from Yorkshire – and crossed the north-south divide to Surrey, to be part of Cobham Christian Fellowship. He became a leader in the church, has been a senior adviser to Pioneer founder Gerald Coates, served as international chair of *March for Jesus*, helped run *Soul in the City* – and most recently chaired the nationwide initiative *Hope08*.

*Hope08* was commended by police, Government and royalty – with Gordon Brown recently holding an event to honour their volunteers at 10 Downing St and Prince Charles hosting a celebratory event at Clarence House.

**SERVANT HEART:**  
Steve Clifford  
becomes head  
of the EA



*This is  
Pioneer at  
its best'*

Already a long-serving Evangelical Alliance board member, Steve said he is inspired by the direction the Alliance is taking. He's honoured to be following in the footsteps of previous General Director Joel Edwards.

'The Church is alive and kicking in the UK – and evangelicals are often at the forefront of local initiatives,' said Steve. 'At this time of incredible change and crisis, there are wonderful opportunities for the Church to present the good news of Jesus in words and action.'

'The Evangelical Alliance is uniquely positioned to bring evangelicals together to serve our communities – and to work together with others to see our nation transformed.'

Aged 54, Steve has played key roles across a whole range of exciting national Church campaigns over the past decade. He will take on his latest role – as head of one of Britain's oldest evangelical organisations – in early April.

'It's a strange place I find myself in,' he explained, 'with all kinds of emotions. Excited, humbled and scared are just three of them. But deep down, I have a sense that God has brought me to this place.'

'So I step forward in faith that he will be to me all that I need in this role of amazing opportunities – and at a time of our nation's history of such enormous challenges.' Steve is married to Ann, and they have a son Jake and a daughter Jordan.

## Real passion

Mike Talbot, the Alliance's Chair of Board, said the EA were 'delighted' to make this appointment. 'Steve has a real passion for the local church and developing young people,' he added, 'which has given him a strong sense for the issues that matter to Christians and non-Christians alike.'

'He is a leader of leaders, gifted at enabling and mobilising teams and individuals into action – with a real ability to build partnerships with people from across the Christian spectrum. He is a visionary, and I'm excited to see how his vision has consistently centred around mission and evangelism.'

'These qualities leave us in no doubt that he is the right person to take forward the Alliance, which exists to unite evangelicals in transforming society. He is well placed to lead the Alliance staff team in representing, networking and resourcing its members in the service of Christ.'

This appointment is seen as a further acknowledgement of the man's abilities – and the respect that is shared by many for Pioneer. 'This is Pioneer at its best,' Gerald Coates pointed out, 'raising national leaders and aspiring for positions of influence.'

*Library Of Lives* will be telling the story of Steve's hopes and aspirations for the EA over the coming months. Said Gerald, 'From all of us at *Library Of Lives*, the National Churches Forum – and particularly Billy and Caroline Kennedy and myself and Anona – we offer Steve all the support we can to unite evangelicals as a forum for change, for the glory of God and the extension of his kingdom.'