

MISSION CALLING



ANDY MEEK

MISSION CALLING

or What I Think I'm Playing At – an Apologia

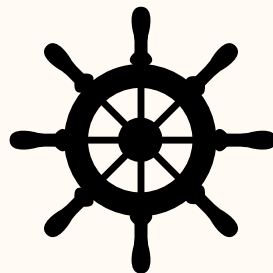
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This is a non-published work, intended for private circulation below decks.

To get started in the right mood, listen to this (click the image):



He's A Pirate



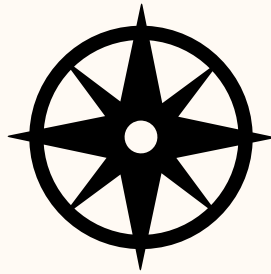
Cover image: the Victoria Inn, Derby, 3rd March 2018 after the Rock Against Homelessness gig

*I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sails shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.*

*I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.*

*I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.*

Sea Fever by John Masefield





Radio North Sea International, 1972 ¹



¹ Source — https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radio_North_Sea_International

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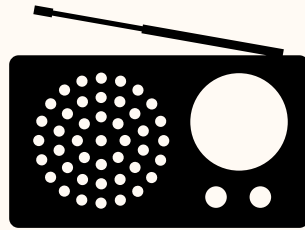
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PROLOGUE

I spent my teenage years in the 1960s, growing up in Norwich, Norfolk. I loved pop music but there wasn't much of it on the stuffy old BBC Light Programme. I would fall asleep listening to fabulous Radio Luxembourg on an old AM valve radio with the glowing dial set to 208 metres in the medium waveband, the sound fading in and out as the ionosphere moved with the time of day, the earth turning in space.

Then came the commercial pirate radio stations broadcasting on illegal frequencies from ships anchored around the east coast just outside the three mile limit. They played non-stop pop, and at age fourteen, I had found my calling; I wanted to be pirate radio DJ. The ingredients of the cocktail were intoxicating: the creative cascade of the pop music, the thrill of breaking the rules and the magic of the radio technology reaching me across the water, through the very air.

By the age of sixteen I was learning to play electric guitar.



Chapter 1

THE NET TIGHTENS

I never became a pirate radio DJ, although I did present some shows on University Radio Bath for a while when I was a student. I had become a Christian through the outreach work of the Christian Union there. I used my guitar-playing to help lead worship and do outreach in coffee bars. When my EKO Ranger 12 was stolen one summer, they held a whip-round to give me enough money to buy a replacement guitar. The memory of that generosity has stayed with me over the years as an early affirmation of a music ministry.

When I graduated I got a job as a physicist at Dungeness nuclear power station in Kent. After a couple of years, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity came my way and I left the good job and a pension to play bass guitar full-time in a Christian rock band called 'Really Free' based in West London.² We led discussions and played in schools and prisons and performed concerts at Christian outreach events.

It was a most exhilarating time for me – intoxicated now with the sense of purpose in spreading the Gospel, the excitement and adventure of travelling and performing, and the camaraderie among the band members and supporters.

Britain's economy was in a poor state in the late 1970's, and paying work for Really Free dried up. We ran out of cash and that was the end of it for me. For years afterwards, I looked back on the time in the band with the emotions that I imagine a Battle of Britain pilot might feel after the war was over – nothing else would ever come close to the sense of thrill and significance.

I married, we had children. I had to get a 'real' job and taught science in a secondary school in Nottinghamshire for a while, then joined Rolls-Royce Submarines in Derby where I worked for over thirty years. There was a link to the sea, but it was mostly an office job and it seemed that my swashbuckling days were long gone. I thought about the words of the Pink Floyd song 'Wish You Were Here': 'Did you exchange a walk-on part in the war for a lead role in a cage?'

Then disaster struck.

My dear wife Kerry got ill with cancer and died in 2014. I took early retirement a year later and tried to begin rebuilding a life, though I felt I was drowning in grief.

² For information about Really Free, see the tribute website that I maintain at <https://reallyfreeband.wordpress.com>

As I recovered, I began to cast around for possible Christian work. I considered using the business analysis and information systems skills I had gained at Rolls-Royce. There was a course at Durham University that taught exactly that, but when I discussed the possibility of studying there with the programme director, the advice was that I needed a theological education first. I was crestfallen and frankly a bit insulted. I had seen my wife pass away and although I was healthy I was no longer young. Mortality was in my thoughts and to put it bluntly, how long had I actually got left? Having lost a couple of years drifting in bereavement, could I afford to spend further time on study? Anyway, I was a mature believer of many years' standing with experience of full-time Christian work and a wide range of church involvement – why would I need to study theology, given all the sermons I had heard and the Bible studies I had done?

I met some people from The Church Mission Society (CMS) at Greenbelt in August 2017 and got interested in the pioneer course.³ The strapline on their brochure appealed to me: 'Fitting in is over-rated'. It looked promising, but would involve a lot of travelling and a big commitment of time and money so I wasn't sure. The academic year started in only a few weeks' time, so I had to decide quickly.



Then when i was praying about it, alone and at home, my eyes fell on an ornament which had been on the mantelpiece for years (as you can tell by the dust!). It is a carrelet, a French fishing hut which is found on the rocky coast of the Côte Sauvage. The method is to lower the

³ See <https://pioneer.churchmissionsociety.org>

net, go away and have a drink and a snooze, then when the tide is right, raise the net which by then is full of lobsters and langoustines. On this day the ladder had fallen off the ornament and as I picked it up to put it back I was struck by a vivid realisation, that I had to 'put back a way of climbing up' – to get back into a position where I might once again be able to 'catch' people for Christ.⁴ In that moment I understood it as direct confirmation from God that I should sign up to study with CMS, which I did.

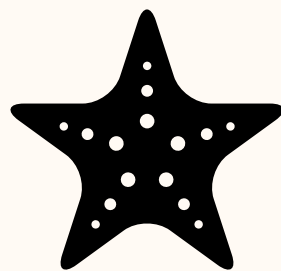
This incident with the carrelet and its ladder served as an immediate guide in making a decision. It made such an impression on me that I continued to reflect on other meanings that might unfold. It is on the edge between the land and the sea – liminal. It is reaching out into deep water, yet still a fixture on the land. This spoke to me of a mission activity that would have firm foundations in Christian tradition, yet be on the edge of traditional Christian social and cultural landscape.



⁴ 'Jesus said to them, "Come with me, and I will teach you to catch people"'. [Gospel of Matthew chapter 4 verse 19](#)

So here is the first quarter of a sketch diagram that builds up into a picture of my mission calling.

The Carrelet



Chapter 2

FLOATY MCFLOATFACE

I had begun to make some connections with Christians in the Fresh Expressions movement⁵ and joined in with a gathering in 2018 at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick. The theme was Celtic Spirituality and sessions were led by Roy Searle of the Northumbria Community. We were encouraged to think about the future of our lives and Christian work using the image of a journey across the water in a small boat.



To help us visualise this, a coracle had been positioned in the centre of our meeting room and we were encouraged to place into it an object that represented something about our mission. To represent music and guitar playing I placed a plectrum, which is just visible on the seat of the coracle near the top of the letter A to the right of the apple. There was something surprisingly moving and powerful to me about the simple act of getting out of my seat in front of

⁵ See <https://freshexpressions.org.uk>

other people and placing my plectrum on board. Somehow, the physical action was a kind of prayer, an offering of myself in commitment to the unknown journey.



With us was an artist, Chris Duffett⁶ who painted a picture to represent the ideas of journey inspired by tales of the 5-6th century monk St Brendan of Ireland, also known as Brendan the Navigator. Brendan was a real historical figure who founded monasteries in Ireland and visited Scotland, Wales and Brittany. In later centuries, fanciful legends were embroidered around his travels, but he certainly would have been experienced in seafaring and may have crossed the Atlantic. In the telling, Brendan and some fellow monks set out on the sea in faith, not knowing their destination. The coracle can be steered only with difficulty, but Brendan looks to God to lead them by the action of the wind and waves.

⁶ See more of Chris Duffett's work at <https://chrisduffettart.com>

The imagery for the Christian pioneer is obvious – the imperative of setting out beyond the safe confines, of travelling together and having faith that God will protect and guide as you go. Chris Duffett’s painting shows Brendan on his own in a coracle on turbulent waves – holding on tight and looking forwards with light and warmth on his back – as he faces a darkness that nevertheless has much light in it and seems alive with possibilities.

'A ship in harbour is safe, but that is not what ships are built for' – so the time came to launch Floaty McFloatface, together with our precious objects, and we held a commissioning service with prayers for all the hopes and dreams represented in it.



There was no champagne across the bows, but the prayers were heartfelt and the event continued to be food for thought for me. Now I began to picture my potential Christian work like St Brendan, alone on a choppy sea with no obvious destination. So the second quarter of my mission picture was created.



The carrelet and the coracle



Chapter 3

WE'RE GOING DOWN THE PUB

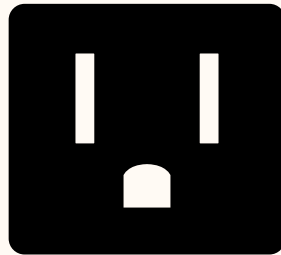


I had some vague idea of doing mission by using music – playing guitar and singing in pubs and clubs. While doing essential reconnaissance, I came across this beer mat which seemed to confirm my instinct that pubs were places where people already feel at home and where they would be open to friendships and meaningful conversations.

I played at a few open mic nights to try out the idea. I chose a couple of pop songs that I could sing well which had some spiritual message and introduced them plainly with some Christian explanation. The audience was happy with the songs but the religious talk met an icy response. They clearly didn't want a sermon.



On one occasion a Salvation Army member came in to the pub near the end of the evening and tried to get people interested in the War Cry magazine or to make a donation. I sensed a kindred spirit, because we were both there to try to spread the gospel, but neither her approach nor mine seemed to be working very well. We were in the right place with the right people at the right time, but we must have been doing something wrong. We were not really connecting.



Chapter 4

IN WHICH I HAVE TO DO SOME THINKING

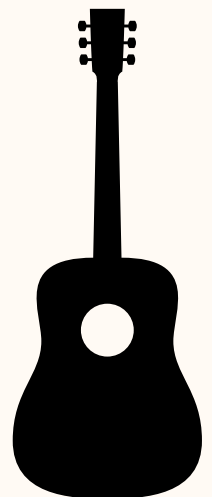
In 2017, I began studying pioneer mission theology at CMS in Oxford. We learnt about reflective practice and learning cycles, which in a nutshell means deliberately thinking about what you are doing, then doing something different. In a Christian context that obviously includes prayer, reading the Bible and getting input from other people followed by taking new action.⁷ It is a way of trying to blend divine wisdom and human knowledge, applying it to the here and now.

So I started to rethink my approach. What was I really trying to do? My naive plan had been to engage with people socially through some mutual interest, manoeuvre them into spiritual discussions and then confront them with the need to repent and believe in Jesus. That should do it! That's how I became a Christian all those years ago. Yet I was now uneasy about this. It seemed manipulative and disrespectful and anyway didn't look like it was going to work. Plus, I'm not even very chatty – a bit of a booky introvert really. But I am still driven by some inner sense that I have to do this, whatever 'this' is. So I tried to return to the source of the urge which I have carried since 1973, and to reinterpret it in the light of my new knowledge. Here are five ideas that helped me find my way:

★ What have you got in your hand?

In the well-known encounter in the Bible, Moses is drawn to a burning bush and God speaks to him from within it.⁸ God wants Moses to speak to the Egyptian pharaoh to make him set the Israelites free. Moses is not keen on doing this – he knows it means trouble – and comes up with excuses. Then God asks him “What have you got in your hand?” It's a stick, and God tells Moses to throw it on the ground, where it (temporarily) becomes a snake. The implication is that God will take and use whatever you already have to perform the mission.

Rather like the episode with the carrellet, I suddenly felt this had a direct meaning for me. What did I have in my hand? – answer – my guitar, which is indeed more or less a stick of wood and literally in my hand. This seemed to be a re-affirmation of the encouragement forty years earlier when the Christian



⁷ There is a whole shelf of books on this subject but a good introduction (if you like theology textbooks) is Thompson, Judith, et al. SCM Studyguide to Theological Reflection. 2nd ed., SCM Press, 2019. [Amazon](#)

⁸ The whole story is in the book of Exodus chapters 3 and 4. Read it here <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/read/eng/GNB/Exod/3/>

Union members gave me money for a new guitar.

★ Eating and drinking with ‘sinners’

Jesus was criticised by the religious people of his day for ‘eating and drinking with sinners’ or social outcasts, against the strict Jewish lifestyle regulations that some followed.⁹ I related this to the ideas of socialising and playing music in pubs and clubs rather than in church buildings or ‘holy’ settings. I don’t think of ordinary people in a pub as evil or immoral (no more than I am, anyway) but it seems right to follow the example of Jesus and go where the people already are.



★ Find out what God is doing and join in

This phrase is a favourite at the Church Mission Society as it was coined by a prominent past general secretary, John V. Taylor.¹⁰ Taylor had been a missionary in Africa and later became the Bishop of Winchester. He had begun to see that the initiative for doing good in the world has already been taken by God. It was no longer right to think of mission as white Western Christians going to black African ‘heathens’ as though they had no idea of goodness or of God.



This idea is tremendously liberating for Christians: instead of hunkering down and trying to be morally safe in a holy huddle, we can look outwards to a world where God is already present and active. How to find it? In my opinion, one way is based on this Bible verse: 'Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God.'¹¹ Look for the love – the friendship, kindness, generosity, peace, justice etc. God is already working through the people there, whether they know it or not.



My early thoughts about musical mission had been to start some kind of music club – until I realised that of course there already were music clubs, open mic nights, jam sessions etc. Why reinvent the wheel? God is already working in this way to bring friendship and communication. This takes a weight off my shoulders, and means I can join in without the overhead of creating my own space. This also fits with the principle of humility: instead of acting as the controlling host, holding the power and setting the rules, I would, like Jesus, be a guest, a *vulnerable visitor*, in someone else’s world.



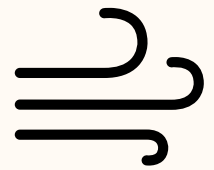
⁹ [Gospel of Mark chapter 2](#)

¹⁰ John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God* (London: SCM Press, 2010). The exact words are 'Mission, therefore, means to recognize what the Creator-Redeemer is doing in his world and try to do it with him.' [Amazon](#)

¹¹ [1 John 4:7](#)

★ Missio Dei

Missio Dei – the mission of God – is the technical term that theologians have used for this idea that God is already present and at work in the world. It includes the concept that the Holy Spirit (sometimes symbolised as the wind) is not only active through people’s actions, but can also be speaking through their words and culture. It’s a slightly complex academic view which was developed in the mid 20th century and is widely taught in mission circles but which probably hasn’t filtered out to the general Christian population yet. In short, it means that the church does not have the monopoly on messages from God, who may well speak to us all through other channels in our culture. There is an example in the Bible where St Paul is preaching in Athens, and quotes from a popular song to make his point.¹²



I also make a connection with the spiritual insights of St Ignatius of Loyola.¹³ One of his main ideas is to find or recognise God in all things – to be attentive to the possibility of the divine all around you and also within yourself.



Putting these two ideas together, I thought about musicians who see themselves as more than entertainers and who look for inspiration in the world around them, but who also ‘dig deep’ to find significance and meaning to express through their art. They are instinctively contemplating and opening themselves up to the voice of God, whether they know it or not.

★ Prophetic dialogue

‘The words of the prophets are written on the subway walls’ sang Simon and Garfunkel in ‘The Sound Of Silence’.¹⁴ The lyrics express in a poetical way exactly the kind of inspiration I am talking about. Taking this idea seriously as a Christian means I have to listen for the voice of God in popular culture as well as through the ‘normal’ religious channels. Actually I think I have been intuitively doing this all my life, filtering out the trivia in pop to listen for someone who is actually trying to tell me something.



I could happily listen for the divine voice in pop songs all day – but how does

¹² Book of Acts 10:22–28 ‘God is not far from any one of us; as someone has said, “In him we live and move and have our being”’. <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/read/eng/GNB/Acts/17/highlight:28/>

¹³ See <https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/ignatian-spirituality/introduction-to-ignatian-spirituality/what-is-ignatian-spirituality/>

¹⁴ Simon & Garfunkel, *The Sound of Silence* (Sony BMG Music Entertainment, 1964), Wednesday Morning, 3AM. Read the lyrics here: <https://www.paulsimon.com/track/the-sound-of-silence/>

this translate into a Christian mission, into reaching out? First of all, it's an act, I hope, of humility. Christian outreach has so often been set to transmit-only but that will not work in today's questioning society. Habit number five in Steven Covey's influential book is 'Seek first to understand, then to be understood'.¹⁵ So when I listen to other people's songs, I am listening for the voice of God and I am also listening for their heart and their life and how the world seems to them.

Dialogue is of course meant to be two-way, so I will sing my songs to other people and let them listen to me and my Christian insights too. If we were only singing 'facts' or opinions to each other, then this would just be an interesting exchange of ideas, but the key to a real dialogue is when people start to sing what is coming from deep within them and when the artistic nuance and musical interpretation leaves a space for us to generate our own meaning from what we hear.



Prominent Christian theologian Tom (N. T.) Wright has written that we all hear four 'echoes of a voice' which speak to us about the longing for justice, the quest for spirituality, the hunger for relationships, and the delight in beauty.¹⁶ Sure enough, these echoes crop up in popular music; for example one piece of research showed that the most popular themes in hit songs are: loss, desire, aspiration, breakup, pain, inspiration, nostalgia, rebellion, being jaded, desperation, escapism and confusion.¹⁷ It is interesting to note that many of these themes are also in the Bible's songbook, the Psalms. Of course they are.

Spirituality, in Tom Wright's list of echoes, is a wide topic itself, with no 'official' definition. John Drane summarised the range of **ideas** about spirituality under the headings of: lifestyle (eg values, community), discipline (eg commitment, authority), and enthusiasm (eg experiences, mystery).¹⁸ Spiritual **questions** are about things such as destiny, purpose, the universe, God, the spirit (or supernatural) realm and suffering.¹⁹ Spiritual **experiences** – religious, sacred, supernatural, transcendent or mystical – 'appear to the person undergoing them to convey or imply some sort of contact with or knowledge about a power, presence or reality *beyond*

¹⁵ Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic*, 1999 reissue (London: Simon and Schuster UK Ltd, 1989). [Amazon](#)

¹⁶ N. T. Wright, *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*, 2011 reissue (London: SPCK, 2006). [Amazon](#)

¹⁷ Shipman, Matt, 'Analysis of 50 Years of Hit Songs Yields Tips for Advertisers', *NC State News*, 2014 <<https://news.ncsu.edu/2014/03/wms-henard-hits2014/>> [accessed 17 June 2021]

¹⁸ John Drane, *Do Christians Know How to Be Spiritual?: The Rise of New Spirituality, and the Mission of the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2005) p.60. [Amazon](#)

¹⁹ Nick Spencer, *Beyond the Fringe, Researching a Spiritual Age: The Report of Revd Yvonne Richmond's Exploration in the Diocese of Coventry into the Spirituality of People Outside the Church* (Calver: Cliff College Publishing, 2005). [Amazon](#)

*themselves and their sense experience.*²⁰ There is no shortage of song material there, indeed ‘music is a preferred medium for expressing religious meaning.’²¹

So we swap songs, maybe talk about them, perhaps share some deep or personal feelings, but *does anything happen?* This is where I need some faith, because I don’t know how this will work. Out of a sense of mission calling, I am intentionally doing something for which the consequences are unknown – setting sail on a relational voyage so to speak, where the destination has not been revealed and will only become apparent on the journey.²²

This, then, is doing Christian mission through prophetic dialogue. Through song and conversation and perhaps robust discussion the Kingdom of God comes close. ‘There is no doubt that it is not the missionary but the Spirit who is the principal agent of evangelization.’²³

I can listen, sing and speak, but it will be the Spirit that goes between us all. Hence the prophetic dimension of the dialogue: ‘The Spirit is not averse to the elemental world of our dreams, the raw emotion of our fears and angers, the illogical certainties of our intuitions, the uncharted gropings of our agnosticism, the compulsive tides of our history. These are his milieu.’²⁴

In another book about mission, the writers speak of ‘entering someone else’s garden.’²⁵ I just hope I can be *sowing the seeds of love.*²⁶



²⁰Jeff Astley, *SCM Studyguide to Religious and Spiritual Experience*, 1st edn (London: SCM Press, 2020) <<https://scmpress.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9780334057963/scm-studyguide-to-religious-and-spiritual-experience>> [accessed 30 November 2020].

²¹ Ethnomusicologist Philip V. Bohlman, quoted in Jeremy S. Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2007). p.16. [Amazon](#)

²² Like God’s call to the elderly Abram: ‘The LORD said to Abram, “Leave your country, your relatives, and your father’s home, and go to a land that I am going to show you”’. [Genesis 12:1](#)

²³ Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004) ch.12 Mission as Prophetic Dialogue, p.360. [Amazon](#).

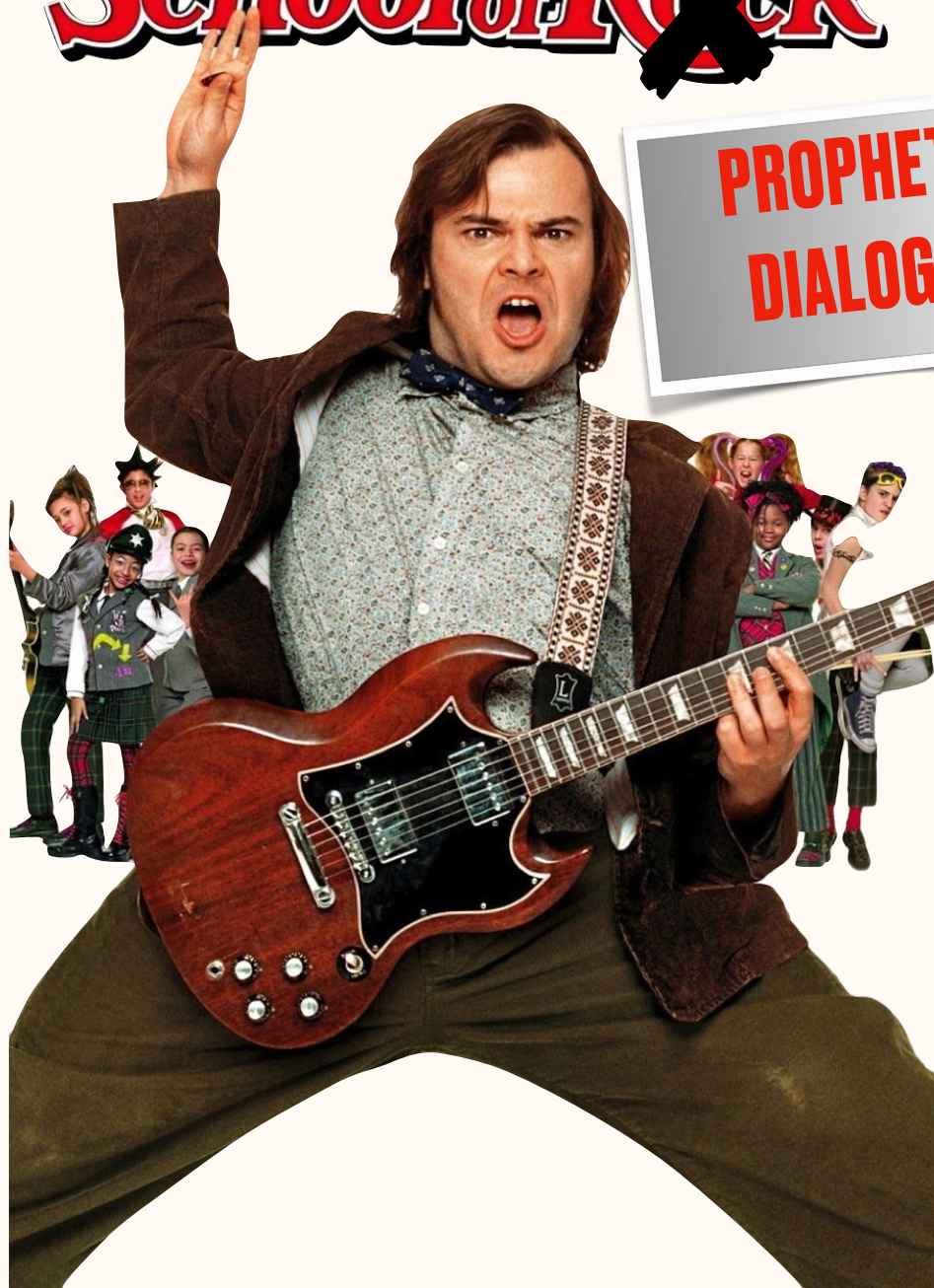
²⁴ Taylor, John V., *The Go-Between God* (London: SCM Press, 2010), ch.3. [Amazon](#)

²⁵ Bevans, Stephen B., and Roger P. Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), ch.6. Entering Someone Else’s Garden. [Amazon](#)

²⁶ Tears for Fears, *Sowing the Seeds of Love* (Fontana Records, 1989), The Seeds of Love. <https://youtu.be/VAAtGOES07W8>

Chapter 5

School of Rock



Here is Jack Black in the comedy film *School of Rock* in which he plays an unqualified slacker who gets a job as a stand-in teacher in a prestigious prep school. He lets the bored class do as they please until deciding (against the school's high-brow ethos) to teach them about the rebellious spirit of rock music and form them into a band.²⁷ In true American movie style they have fun at last, learn to work together, and win the Battle of the Bands competition. High brow it isn't, but it has some of same missional ideas that I relate to. It explores the use of popular

²⁷ Movie trailer: The School of Rock (Paramount Pictures, 2003) <https://youtu.be/TExocOMG4I4>

music (which is *the music of the people*) in a liberational way, speaking truth to power, building community and expressing lament. The rebellion is a requisite component, akin to the ‘heretical imperative’ of the Northumbria Community summed up as ‘speaking out when necessary or asking awkward questions that upset the status quo.’²⁸

Unsurprisingly, the *School of Rock* does not contain a fully rounded mission theology. The communication is only in one direction, aimed at ‘The Man’, which Christians might think of as shorthand for the ‘forces and authorities and rulers of darkness and powers in the spiritual world’ against which we fight.^{29, 30} It misses the element of recognising the presence of God in the other person and listening with mutual respect.

I had a dream that new people could be encouraged to listen out for the voice of God in their own hearts and lives and to express that to each other and the world through music. They would be a *school of prophets*, as Jonny Baker describes them: ‘In the case of prophets in the Old Testament there were schools of prophets, and I suspect pioneers were rarely alone. So as well as seeing and dissent the nurturing of this gift also requires community – new possibilities will come through dreaming and reflecting with others, knocking around ideas, eating together and conversation.’³¹

Practical theology

So far I had been thinking about prophetic dialogue as an exchange of ideas, mainly through songs and associated discussions. In other words ... words. This is a kind of theology – literally ‘talking about God’, but I wondered how would that work for people who don’t write songs, or who are not bookworms like me? ‘There are many forms of theology. Theology is taught and written, danced and sung, sculpted and painted, even dreamed and cried.’³² But even this sounds a bit cerebral; what I needed was *practical theology*. The academics have a variety of meanings attached to that phrase but I am homing in on ‘an activity of faith undertaken by believers’ and ‘a method for thinking’ [about God etc].³³ The prophetic dialogue expands beyond shared words into various kinds of shared life and activity – in my case all centred around music.

²⁸ Miller, Trevor, *The Heretical Imperative, How Then Shall We Live?* (Gold Series) (Northumbria Community, 2003) [Northumbria Community Bookshop](#)

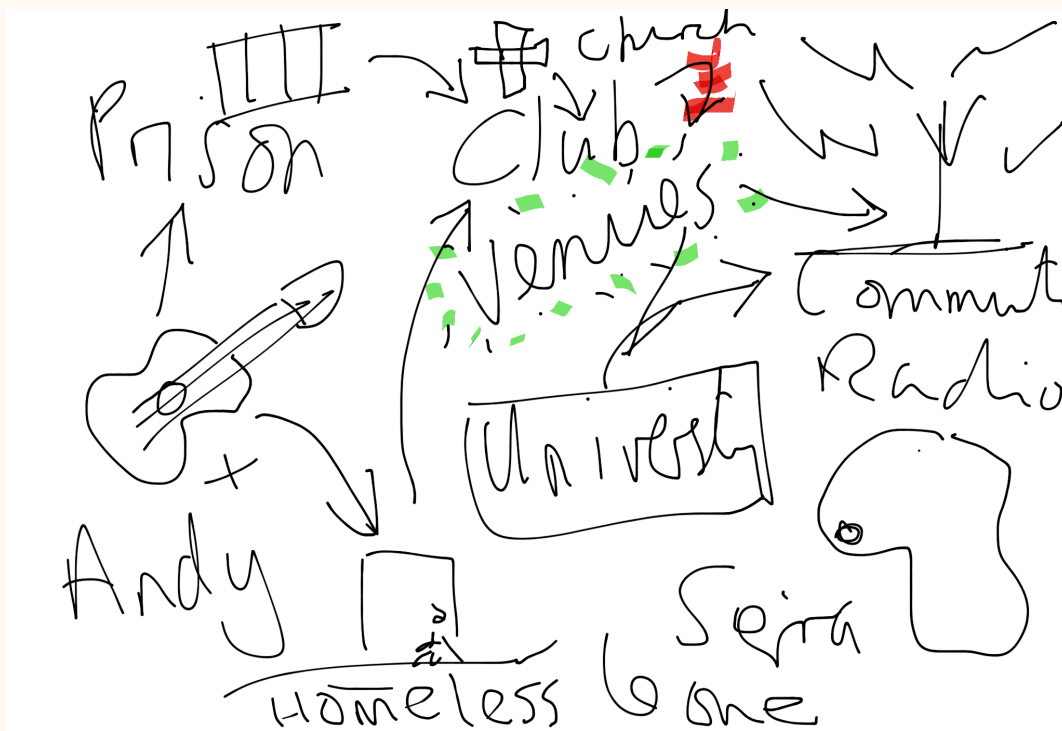
²⁹ [Ephesians 6:12](#),

³⁰ Movie clip: *The School of Rock – The Man* (Paramount Pictures, 2003) <https://youtu.be/37oJqWp4rJM>.

³¹ Jonny Baker, ‘1. The Pioneer Gift’, in *The Pioneer Gift*, Kindle (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2014). [Amazon](#)

³² Sedmak, Clemens, *Doing Local Theology: A Guide for Artisans of a New Humanity*, Faith and Cultures Series (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2002), p.11. [Amazon](#)

³³Pete Ward, *Introducing Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2017), ch.1.



Now my mind was exploding with ideas about a *redemption pathway*. I could help people learn guitar, perhaps teach people in prison, give them a social skill that enhanced their dignity and also a means of expression – maybe even help their literacy. Perhaps homeless people too could be drawn into an accepting place and find some undemanding company where they could connect with society again. People from churches could be encouraged to enter other people’s worlds of clubs and pubs as *Vulnerable Visitors*; there is a music technology course at Derby University, so maybe student or lecturers could get drawn in; we could play on community radio; host a show to discuss the spiritual insights in our songs and other pop music; maybe take our songs abroad, maybe share music (and the voice of God) with Sierra Leone; start a recording studio there to boost the economy and promote local talent? On the ‘back-of-an-envelope’, I was having an *adventure of the imagination*.³⁴



Africa? Sierra Leone?

It doesn't have to be Sierra Leone, but I have visited Freetown with Christian friends to deliver health education and help [set up a micro-enterprise development scheme](#). The country has suffered much from a civil war, ebola and mudslides. It has a historic connection to the Church Mission Society

³⁴ Jonny Baker and Cathy Ross, *Imagining Mission with John V. Taylor* (London: SCM Press, 2020), ch.3.

This was all getting a bit much to think about. In a written interview for CMS, I was asked ‘How can we pray for you?’ and I wrote this boat-shaped reply:³⁵

**I am a lone yachtsman on a wide ocean, trying
to steer a course by the stars I can see.**

May I understand my charts.

May the wind fill my sails.

May I stay salty.

So now we have three parts of the picture: the idea of a static reaching-out with the carret, then some exciting ad-venturing in a coracle to who knows where, now a vessel under command with charts and stars to steer by:



³⁵ 'I blame the radio' — Interview with Andy Meek <https://pioneer.churchmissionsociety.org/2019/04/i-blame-the-radio-interview-with-andy-meek/>

[chapter 6](#) who has a vision as God called him to speak. I relate to the response that Isaiah makes: “I will go – send me”. A flaming creature had touched Isaiah’s lips with a burning coal as a sign of forgiveness and cleansing. So I think he had *hot lips* and I had my website name. It is music-related as a nickname sometimes used for skilled jazz wind instrument players and is eye-catchingly risqué.

hotlipsmusic.net
God gave rock 'n' roll to you

Silence
Delerium feat. Sarah McLachlan

Andy Meek
16th March 2021
songs
1990s, EDM, electronica, Liminal, trance

Delerium - Silence. Final Fantasy 8 HD
Watch later Share

Watch on YouTube

This song is one of the all-time electronica/trance greats and so there are several versions and remixes available. One of the best is a live performance by the Dutch DJ Tiësto ([here](#)) which captures the excitement and immersion of the collective dance experience.

In the spirit of choosing the road less travelled however, I have used a different version here. This video comprises clips from the Japanese role-playing computer game Final Fantasy VIII, in which heroes battle a great evil, but also have to deal with their own relationships and internal struggles [sounds familiar?]. The song matches the images of tension and yearning so well that it could have been part of the

Why 'Hotlips'? About us Join us

Search ...

CONTRIBUTORS

Andy Meek

- Silence
- Let The River Run
- Highway to Hell
- Call Me
- No Roots

Special Guests

- Anthem

Judith Twani

- Look Through My Eyes
- Everybody Hurts
- Bring Me To Life
- If The World Was Ending
- Don't Give Up

TAGS

1960s 1970s 1980s 1990s 2000s
2010s acoustic alternative

<https://hotlipsmusic.net>

Hotlipsmusic.net is only one building block in my ideas about doing mission by prophetic dialogue, but it does still show some of the essential theological ideas. To choose a song for a

post, the contributor has to be aware of the musical culture around them, and to be alert to the possibility of a spiritual message. Maybe this is simply a matter of attitude: if you want to hear from God, then you will – or as Jesus says: “If you have ears, pay attention!”³⁶

Even this single building block began to seem like too much work for one person to maintain. I was also aware of the limits of my own musical tastes and experience; I don’t know all the good songs that God might speak through. The demographic that I aimed to reach expanded from people at gigs where I might perform to anyone who listened to popular music on the radio. I needed the diversity of input and also assistance with the work, so the next phase was to begin to recruit other contributors.

A friend was interested and we set about creating new content, with her learning ‘on the job’. To help other new starters, I wrote an ‘editorial and style guide’ as we went along. For contributors who sense God in the world differently to traditional Christian faith, the language is as honest and direct as I could make it, without presupposing specific religious beliefs. That way, the door is open to spiritual seekers, as well as those already settled in their faith.³⁷

Writing the guide crystallised the outline pattern of posts which would always comprise a music video, comment, and a related quotation from the Bible. In miniature, this encapsulates the mission theology.

Your mission, should you choose to accept it ...³⁸

- God is already at work in the world.
- Our job as Christians in mission, is to find out where God is working, and join in.
- One of those places is popular music, where God is already speaking to and through sensitive musicians.
- Just as Jesus entered our world we must enter other people’s worlds and speak their language.
- We respect the presence of God that is already there, and undertake mission by listening and sharing our own insights.
- Together, we all try to listen for the voice of God and follow it – seeking the kingdom of God.

³⁶ For example in [Luke chapter 8](#).

³⁷ Hotlipsmusic editorial and style guide is available [here](#).

³⁸ Oh alright then! Theme from Mission: Impossible - Arranged and Conducted by the Composer, Lalo Schifrin (Dot. Universal Music Group, 1967) <<https://youtu.be/O07WucFwdq8>>.



Icon by [Anton Rublev](#), 'The Trinity' (adapted).

Chapter 7

BEING MORE PIRATE

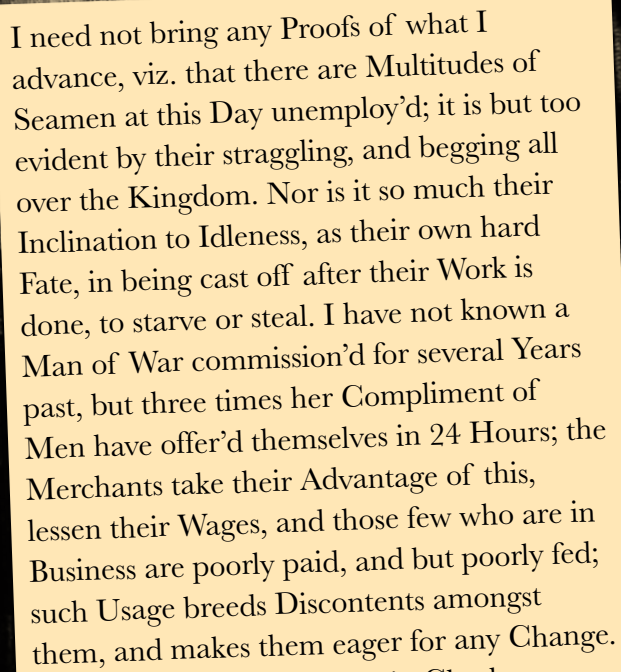


In response to the question ‘What are the top books about mission?’, a friend recommended ‘Be More Pirate’.³⁹ I was drawn in by the title, because of my earlier interest in pirate radio, although I really only expected another business-orientated personal improvement book recommending self-promotional swagger. However, the ideas were far more exciting than that.

The author had taken a genuine interest in the historical Caribbean pirate phenomenon, which had a ‘Golden Age’ from about 1690 to 1725. In those days, money meant gold and silver metal, and Spain in particular had made itself rich by shipping vast plundered quantities from

³⁹Sam Conniff Allende, *Be More Pirate: Or How to Take On the World and Win* (London: Penguin, 2018) <[Amazon](#)>.

the Americas. For decades various countries, England included, had issued 'letters of marque and reprisal' to privateers. With most of the military navies occupied in international sea battles, raids and blockades, this was effectively an outsourcing strategy. Maritime mercenary licences were granted to permit the holders to loot the merchant ships of whichever country was a national enemy at the time. It was a kind of official piracy where the government got a share of the prize, settled through an Admiralty court. Enterprising raiders could even shop around for suitable flags of convenience.



I need not bring any Proofs of what I advance, viz. that there are Multitudes of Seamen at this Day unemploy'd; it is but too evident by their straggling, and begging all over the Kingdom. Nor is it so much their Inclination to Idleness, as their own hard Fate, in being cast off after their Work is done, to starve or steal. I have not known a Man of War commission'd for several Years past, but three times her Compliment of Men have offer'd themselves in 24 Hours; the Merchants take their Advantage of this, lessen their Wages, and those few who are in Business are poorly paid, and but poorly fed; such Usage breeds Discontents amongst them, and makes them eager for any Change.

Daniel Defoe and Captain Charles Johnson, A General History of the Pyrates,

With constantly shifting European political alliances and changing legal jurisdictions in the colonies, long delays in communication to ships on the high seas and difficulties in navigation⁴⁰, it was a chaotic time, compounded by the temptation for privateers to go seriously private and under-declare or take all of the booty – hence buried treasure. The governors of the plantations were charged with suppressing actual (unlicensed) piracy, but the stolen assets made places like Port Royal in Jamaica very wealthy. Official loyalties could be compromised and the authorities might, shall we say, come to mutually beneficial local arrangements with independent seafarers.

England (Great Britain after the Union in 1707) had fought through a century of foreign wars as well as suffering a civil war. Financially exhausted, the nation made two-thirds of its navy redundant and the scene was set for a serious increase in piracy. Former Royal Navy crew were unemployed and destitute and looked for work using the skills they knew best – sailing and fighting. And strangely, this is where the story starts to connect with pioneering Christian mission.

Many of the former ordinary members of the navy would have been press-ganged into service: virtually kidnapped or violently coerced. Then when on board they would have suffered

⁴⁰ A fascinating read on the topic of navigation is Dava Sobel, Longitude: The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time, Harper Perennial 2008 (London: Fourth Estate, 1996). It has nothing to do with Christian mission, unless you want to make an elaborate metaphor about life, knowing where you are and what time it is etc.

grim working conditions and brutal naval discipline. But now, forming their own crews for private enterprise, they determined to operate together in a more benign, cooperative way. Pirate ships' companies were bound together not by imposed government regulation, but by a Pirate Code, or Articles of Association, drawn up to encourage membership. New crew members signed up to the articles, which set out rules for discipline, sharing the spoils and compensation for injury. Several complete codes have survived, despite the typical practice of pirates on the verge of capture being to destroy them as potential evidence in a trial.⁴¹ The rules varied by ship and even sometimes by voyage, yet the themes are fairly consistent and remarkably socially advanced for the period:

- A democratic instinct: obedience to the captain was required (essential in high-stakes engagements), yet 'Every man has a vote in affairs of moment' and pirate captains could even be deposed through a vote rather than mutiny and bloodshed.
- Equal share of provisions (and liquor).
- Fair share of the spoils on a commission basis: 'no prey, no pay.'
- Compensation for injury with a tariff such as 'six hundred pieces of eight for the loss of a right arm'.
- Rules for communal living, for example: 'No person to game at cards or dice for money'; 'The lights and candles to be put out at eight o'clock at night: if any of the crew, after that hour still remained inclined for drinking, they were to do it on the open deck'; 'The musicians to have rest on the Sabbath Day.'

Now for sure, this was a lifestyle built on violence and theft, but the difference was that instead of being government agents with a 'licence to kill', the pirates were doing it for themselves. They were not just out to get rich, some of them were actually trying to build a better world with values centring around personal freedoms. In fact, for about eleven years, there was a fledgling pirate republic based at Nassau on the island of New Providence in the Bahamas.⁴²

OK, they *were* mostly trying to get rich, and were probably not well educated in matters of political philosophy, but there are hints of the ideals that became popular decades later in the American and French Revolutions – 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'⁴³. Yet the pirates' practical, if

⁴¹ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pirate_code

⁴² Watch the Netflix dramatised documentary 'The Lost Pirate Kingdom', trailer here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPVla9NANlc>. Sam Conniff, author of 'Be More Pirate', is one of the narrators.

⁴³ The French national motto 'Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité', see <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/coming-to-france/france-facts/symbols-of-the-republic/article/liberty-equality-fraternity>

And then a strange thing happened to me.

As I walked around a canal marina one day, objects in front of me mysteriously aligned to present an image that seemed to contain a message. It was like the Channel 4 station identity videos where the camera moves through a scene and at a certain position, objects line up to make the 4 shape.⁴⁴



In the foreground was a canal boat decorated with pirate motifs and flags and behind it was a wharf crane. In the distance, just visible beyond the trees, was a church steeple. These elements seemed to bring my ideas about mission together.

The immediate connection was to be with the piratical principles of adventure, freedom and solidarity – not romantic swashbuckling nonsense, but properly understood as the Christian ideals of seeking spiritual treasure, liberty from legalistic religion and identification with the outcasts.

⁴⁴ Channel 4 station ident videos — my favourite is ‘the pylons’ here <http://tig.gy/?Y1DN1>

The crane reminded me of the carrellet – reaching out to people.

The church – well it was there in the frame but far away – a legacy landmark but not really part of the present action.

I had found the concept for the missing quadrant of the mission picture. The skull and crossbones is of course the traditional symbol for a pirate, but that felt a bit too blood-curdling for my purposes, so I decided to use the image of a parrot instead.

I happened to have an inflatable plastic parrot left over from a children’s game and adopted it as an emblem, giving her a proper pedigree pirate name, but ‘Minnie’ for short.⁴⁵

Since she was to be a prophetic pirate parrot, I let her perch for a few weeks in the foyer of the Church Mission Society headquarters in Oxford to encourage people to ‘be more pirate’; first in an ornamental tree, then in the coat stand, then to my delight she *moved herself* to a prominent spot on top of the welcome display screen. That was when someone had a word in my shell-like to take the parrot away!



Minnie is a polite pedigree plastic prophetic pirate parrot, so now she sits in my study and is positioned behind me so that she seems to be perched on my shoulder when I am on a Zoom call, squawking in my ear:

B e M o r e P i r a t e !

⁴⁵ Madame Bonny Chateaubelair Harlequinne Minervois O’Malley de Vinyl



Chapter 8

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

When I went on a training course for missional entrepreneurship, we had to present our 'big idea' in the form of a business proposal as though we were seeking funds from a grant-making body. This is what I wrote then, followed by what I think now.

What I thought then ...

Summary

My mission is to activate and encourage a supportive network of musicians and their friends using popular music in social and entertainment settings in order to foster spiritual, social, cultural, and community development. In short: **'make more love in the world using rock 'n' roll'**.

Values

This work would promote the following values:

- ★ Mutuality – Participants are primarily friends who both give and receive, not just commercial clients or suppliers
- ★ Listening – Listening to each other's ideas in song is central
- ★ Creativity – New songs written, recorded, performed and taught (literally and metaphorically).
- ★ Learning – Sharing musical and other skills, improving ability and confidence

Success

Success would look like this:

Regular meetings of musicians and friends in convivial, community leisure contexts to share enjoyment of live music mixed with intentional discussions about subjects such as justice, spirituality, relationships and beauty.

People without prior Christian commitment gaining a sense of connection with the divine through respectful, conscious listening to others and through searching for the inner voice and expressing it in their own music and song lyrics. Reciprocally,

Christians listening to the love, the yearnings, the lament in people's hearts and the voice of God at that time and that place for them.

A supportive social world of friendships around this – family, fans and supporters, waifs and strays. Informal music lessons, jam sessions and rehearsals. A periphery of semi-commercial activities such as catering, transport, lighting and sound engineering, publicity and merchandising that could serve as personal development / rehabilitation environment for needy individuals.

A moderated online social networking platform for people to express and share their feelings through written reflections on popular music which supports and enhances the meetings in person. This material to be a resource for other groups. There is potential for this to be developed into spin-off products such as a book or radio series.

Impact

The central feature of the overall project is to facilitate spiritual encounter through meaningful face-to-face personal contacts. However, this 'grant application' is focused on the social media platform element of the project which can be developed in advance of and separately from the live meeting element.

In isolation, the Hotlipsmusic website cannot be expected to deliver substantive transformation for individuals. The relevant business metrics are inputs and outputs such as number of web posts made and number of views. Work is undertaken to develop a reliable, substantive corpus of content that can be used to seed future personal and group interactions. As a foundation-laying activity it is useful for contact-development and gaining interest and support.

How is this mission?

The overall Hotlips Music project, of which the website is one part, is based on the sound mission concept of 'prophetic dialogue'.⁴⁶ This recognises that God is already at work in the world outside the church (the 'Missio Dei') and the missional task is to alert the people to the voice of God already among them. The 'missionary' is a recipient as well as a deliverer of this voice. It embraces a type C theology of redemption through liberation and a holistic salvation.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), ch.12.

⁴⁷ Bevans and Schroeder, 2004, p.37.

Hotlips Music is a cross-cultural missionary activity because it steps outside the church sub-culture and engages with people in their own social environments using the cultural activities that they already participate in and enjoy.

In terms of the Anglican Five Marks of Mission⁴⁸, the overall project is aligned primarily with:

- Proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom, particularly by helping people find that from within themselves and their music.
- Responding to human need by loving service, by providing an environment for friendship where people are given the dignity of being properly listened to, and where they can exercise and develop musical and related business activity skills.
- Transforming the unjust structures of society – in part, as songwriters are given a platform to express protest and also by re-presenting music not as a consumer activity but as community contribution and participation.

How is this enterprise?

Hotlips Music is an enterprise in the sense that it is a new concept – I am not aware of any similar undertaking, at least in the UK.

It is a not-for profit enterprise and the nature of the entire project and the hotlips website is not conceived as a trading business, although it will have costs and suppliers, correspondence and contracts. Group meetings might have a small entry fee or whip-round to cover costs like room hire. However, the website has been developed independently of a 'free' hosted environment: we would aim to keep the space free from advertising and any compromise that could bring. The concept is more co-operative in style, not acting as a supplier organization, delivering a product or service to consumers, but as a facilitation environment, fostering and amplifying wholesome human relationships and greater mutual understanding.

The core idea of a low-key, low-cost local music sharing club is *extensible* and potentially employment-generating. Over time, local initiatives (such as a showcase concert) could engage with the peripheral traders around the music business. There is scope for more structured cooperation with related organisations including music and theological education institutions, and rehabilitation / recovery ministries and related services.

⁴⁸ ACC-6, 'Anglican Communion: Marks of Mission', *Anglican Communion Website*, 1984 <<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx>>.

The central component of a music club is also *expandable* – with future potential for specific products and services such as a book based on the website contents, concerts and recordings. All of these would serve as outreach channels to enhance the core purpose of bringing people together in person.

Hotlips Music is also potentially *exportable*. It could be adapted to and shared with other cultures and languages. Here are the seeds of a national or even international movement, perhaps through a franchised ‘Hotlips Music Club’ brand.

What I think now ...

The enforced isolation and my non-attendance at normal church services during the initial Covid lockdown period of 2020 caused me to re-appraise involvement with traditional church just at the time I happened to be studying a module on mission ecclesiology. After a few weeks of disappointment and attempts at online worship, I simply ‘stopped going’, intentionally (but experimentally and provisionally) breaking a habit of a lifetime. Nothing bad seemed to happen. I was influenced by the book ‘Invisible Church’ which documents the apparently growing phenomenon of committed Christians deliberately choosing to follow ‘The Way’ outside of formal church involvement.⁴⁹ I read an earlier book on the subject, which confirmed my sailing-related metaphors:

For many, the decision to leave church is like choosing to leave a cruise ship on which they have been journeying. They are left clutching their cases on the wharf at a foreign port as they watch the liner steaming off to the next port without them ... For some, it would seem that a time spent navigating their own way and travelling light is part of what God is calling them to. To push the analogy further, it appears that it is time to buy one's own small yacht and continue the journey which is substantially different from travelling on the liner and may involve a different course, new stopovers as well as new adventures, threats, dangers, excitements and opportunities.

For these leavers, the smell of the sea and the thought of the wind on their face is too powerful to simply stay in port. They need to find their own way, to sail simply driven by the wind and to feel the spray of the waves. So they find themselves down at the wharf sinking the last of their travellers' cheques into buying and outfitting a small yacht.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Steve Aisthorpe, *The Invisible Church* (Edinburgh: St Andrew Press, 2016).

⁵⁰ Alan Jamieson, *A Churchless Faith: Faith Journeys beyond the Churches* (London: SPCK Publishing, 2002), p.126, 128.



The 'Navicella' (little boat) oil painting in St Peter's Basilica, the Vatican (1628)
(Source [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navicella_\(mosaic\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navicella_(mosaic)))

The use of the sea as a religious symbol runs throughout the Bible and Christian history, and is explored at length in the delightful book by Ed Newell, 'The Sacramental Sea'.⁵¹ In itself, the sea can represent chaos and danger (it contains monsters) but it is also a place where God's power is seen in the act of creation and through miracles such as the parting of the Red Sea and Jesus walking on water.

Voyages on the sea were literally a means towards mission in the journeys of St Paul and the Celtic saints, but have long been presented as metaphors for the Christian life as a journey or continuous pilgrimage with the church as a ship or boat.⁵²

⁵¹ Ed Newell, *The Sacramental Sea: A Spiritual Voyage through Christian History* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd, 2019).

⁵² St Hippolytus, (c.170–230) *De Antichristo*, n, lix. 'The world is the sea, on whose waves the Church is tossed indeed, but perisheth not; for it bears with it a skilful Steersman, Christ; and erect in its centre carries a trophy over death, for it brings with it the cross of the Lord.'

St Ambrose: (c. 339–397) *De Virg.* cap.xviii. n. 118. ed. Migne.'The Church is a ship, which voyages successfully in this world by means of the sail of the Lord's cross, filled by the breath of the Holy Ghost'

These are from secondary sources — the originals are available in Latin but I could not find full English translations.



World Council of Churches logo

Years ago, before ever I knew about Brendan or pirates or pilgrimage, I had a dream in which I visited a ship in harbour. It was a luxury cruise liner and for a while I was in a cocktail bar surrounded by glamorous people drinking and socialising. I did not seem to fit in so I left and went towards another ship on the other side of the harbour. That one was a warship, grey and low in the water, loaded with stores and prepared for action. I knew this was where I belonged and that the meaning of the dream was for me to make a choice between different kinds of Christian living.

What's in a name?

I take exception to the term 'churchless', as though there is some deficiency relative to a supposed objective norm of Christian life. I call that '*ecclesio-normativity*'. Some of my CMS friends have created a schematic 'spectrum' to represent different kinds of Christian pioneer, but I find it does not have a place for the kind of mission I have written about here.⁵³ The most obvious category they present is inscribed: 'Pioneers venture into the edges of postmodern culture, exploring spirituality alongside fellow seekers and nomads.' However, it is drawn inside a box labelled 'Fresh Expressions of Church' inside another box labelled 'Church Planting'. I don't want to start a church, although that statement leads to the obvious question 'What do you mean by church?' If it means buildings, legal entities, budgets, regulations and hierarchies, then I am not interested, but if it means people consciously encouraging each other to learn about Christ and follow him, then I am. For the time being, I am content to refer to my way of following Christ as '*non-conformist*', despite it still being a negation of some other 'standard' behaviour, rather than descriptive of my own. It has some historical precedent and I do indeed appear to have the gift of not fitting in.

⁵³ Tina Hodgett and Paul Bradbury, 'Pioneering Mission Is a Spectrum', *ANVIL: Journal of Theology and Mission*, 34.1 (2018), 30-34. <<https://churchmissionsociety.org/church-mission-society-anvil-volume-34-issue-1-feb-2018/>>

The current climate

Our western culture is often described as being post-modern but the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman called it 'liquid modernity' in which 'change is *the only* permanence, and uncertainty is *the only* certainty'.⁵⁴ How to navigate a Christian life of mission in such a world?

Christian academic Martyn Percy connects the ideas of climate-change induced sea level rise with this same cultural phenomenon as it affects a traditional 'solid' church: 'We are entering an era in which the only way to reform the church is to protest and resist, even daring to withdraw, just as the first Protestants did.'⁵⁵ Theologian Pete Ward offers the idea of a 'Liquid Church' which, like water, flows around a network of dynamic relational contacts.⁵⁶ He says 'a network-based church cannot be planned. It must grow.' (ch.6)

I feel like a climber who has flogged his way valiantly up Mt Snowdon only to discover that there is a railway to the summit on the other side. Writing in 2002, Pete Ward gave a health warning: 'Liquid church does not exist yet' – but his book expresses well the future kind of Christian living I expect for me and my new crew.

Well, m'hearties. I fell into a lobster pot, and what started as a memoir turned from being a trip round the bay into an ocean voyage. I remember reading 'The Lord of the Rings' to my children for months as a bedtime story. Over the course of nine hundred pages its writing style cleverly changes from simple narrative to grandiose epic. Two pages from the end they said to me "Dad, stop reading, it's so boring." So if you have read this far, thanks for staying.

I have tried to join together ideas about life as pilgrim journey, the heretical imperative (hence piracy), the rising sea of liquid modernity and mission as prophetic dialogue.

But what I really want to know is

[Are You Gonna Go My Way?](#)



⁵⁴ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, Revisited 2012 (Cambridge, UK: Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2000), Foreword to 2012 Edition.

⁵⁵ Martyn Percy, 'Churches and Cultural Climate-Change Denial (Part Three): Forecasting and Futurescape', *Meander*, 2021 <<https://meander.network/posts/churches-and-cultural-climate-change-denial-part-three-forecasting-and-futurescape/>> [accessed 27 January 2022].

⁵⁶ Pete Ward, *Liquid Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), ch.4.

**We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams:
World losers and world forsakers
On whom the pale moon gleams;
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world forever it seems.**

'Ode' by Arthur O'Shaughnessy (1st verse), quoted in Alison Morgan, *The Word on the Wind: Renewing Confidence in the Gospel*, 1st edn (Oxford: Monarch Books, 2011), ch.13.

Full poem and notes here <https://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/poems/ode/>

