

"I thank my God...because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." (Phil 1:3-5)

Dear Partners

The Trustees met recently to discuss the latest set of applications requesting support from GPT. Preparing for the meeting was hard work and also extremely encouraging. It was encouraging because of both the number (we had 38 different applications to consider) and the quality of applications. (For example one potential theological educator was described by his Professor as being the brightest student he had ever taught – the Prof in question having taught over 1,000 students over a 15 year period.) It was hard work because of the sheer volume of paper that needed to be read, but also because we did not know what funds were available and therefore how to prioritise amongst the people and projects to determine which we would be able to support.

As it turned out, had we met just forty-eight hours earlier then most of our work would have been in vain for we would have had no money to spend. Or more accurately, we would have had no money to spend on *new* people and ventures. In fact we would have had to spend our meeting deciding on which of those we had supported in prior years we could continue to support and from whom we would have had to withdraw support. It could have been a very distressing meeting – but given the way this is written you will know that things did not pan out this way.

Remarkably – miraculously even – in the hours running up to the meeting two significant pledges were received that meant we could honour all our intentions to those we had supported in the prior year (we are always clear we can not make firm commitments beyond a twelve month horizon), and also make a serious dent in the pile of those seeking support for the first time. If ever we were in doubt that we are dependent on God for the work to prosper.....

Behind this story there are two important issues to understand. First, each January we start the year with significant commitments. The independent student embarking on three years of study at theological college needs support for the full three years. If we backed him last year, we expect he will reapply this year (and again next year!). So to make the same level of grants to *new* initiatives as we did in the previous year, our total level of gifts must rise year on year (at least during the first few years of GPT, until such a time as when the first church plants that we backed have reached financial independence).

Secondly, we are a work that is dependent on a few significant donors. We have minimal knowledge of who will give what, or when they will give. We could decide to build a big pot of reserves to give us increased confidence for the future, but we have concluded that is poor stewardship.

We live so to speak, hand to mouth and we will have to communicate clearly to you, our partners, when there is a real need. Last Monday we either put on hold or declined to consider nine applications, in most cases for want of money. We've given you a flavour of some of these people and projects overleaf. Do please pray that God's glory would be enhanced through them. Thank you for your partnership in the gospel.

Simon Pilcher
Chairman

Contact us

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NEW PEOPLE AND PROJECTS WE HOPE TO PARTNER

> Ministry

After three years in student ministry in Belgium and three years theological training (the last in Paris), this summer Steve Orange and his family move back to Brussels to pastor a small but growing congregation. Largely secular and resistant to the gospel, Belgium epitomises the spiritual battlefield of continental Europe. Steve and Dawn's long-term vision is to see more Belgian co-workers being disciplined, trained and equipped by the local church. Their shortfall is £4,000.

> Theological Students (academic year 07/08)

- 2nd year student from Bradford needing another £5,000 to study
- 1st year student from a church plant in Sheffield needing another £3,000 each year for the next 3 years
- 1st year student who has been an apprentice in Sussex for 2 years needs £4,600 to pay his fees
- 1st year student whose sending church is struggling to make ends meet but has committed a minimum of £500 per year whilst he is at college
- 1st year student (with wife and children) who is selling his house to fund his theological studies needs to raise a further £5,000 per year

> Apprentices / Pre-college training

Apprentice Schemes in Norfolk, Hull, Leicestershire – requests ranging from £2K – 6K

NEWS FROM PEOPLE & PROJECTS

> St Mark's New Ferry Women's worker and Ministry Trainee

St Mark's New Ferry is an Urban Priority Area parish 3 miles from the centre of Liverpool. GPT is helping to fund a ministry apprentice and a woman's worker – Claire Mason.

Claire has been at St Mark's for 5 years, and has been establishing ministry among women and children in an area with high percentages of one-parent families, disability, poor health and poor education.

Claire's role is also to train women, both in St Mark's and at the North West partnership training course.

There are very few full-time women's workers in the North West, and in the coming year St Mark's are sacrificially releasing more of

Claire's time to use her experience and ability to train women in the North West Partnership.

> Thanks from former students now in their first year of ministry

"We as a family are very appreciative of your generous support which has enabled us to follow God's will for our lives. I have found the theological training invaluable in my ministry and am only now realising what I learnt."

"We're involved in a church growth initiative on a new housing estate north of Lincoln... We are very grateful from all our supporters (of which GPT were a major one) to enable us to stay at Oak Hill for a third year. We are sure that the additional time of study has helped very much in preparation for our new role."

PEOPLE & PROJECTS SEEKING CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP

Pre-college	3 Apprentice Schemes (Stoke, London and the Wirral) £3,000 for each scheme
Theological College	8 students – average grant is £3,000 (Couples with children need to raise c £30,000 and single students c £13,000)
Ministry initiatives	5 church plants and 7 workers Typically grants are £5,000 – between a quarter and a fifth of the cost of employing a gospel worker
Overseas	Church plant in South Africa – c £5,000 Training scheme in Cuba – c £8000 3 individuals training for ministry in Serbia, Latvia and South Africa – c £3,000 each

If you would like more information about any of the people and projects we currently partner, or would like to support them financially or be put in touch with them, please contact Brian O'Donoghue (contact details overleaf).