

Whilst his leadership with Archbishop Warlock in developing ecumenical partnership in Liverpool owed much to him being a bishop: his outstanding challenge to unhealthy militantism in Liverpool and oppressive Thatcherism across the Nation, his leadership in 'The Faith in the City Commission', his writing, his deep concern for social injustice and his challenge to comfortable Britain would have been even more effective and far reaching if it could have operated without the shackles of episcopacy and the impeding narrow interests of the Church where his voice was not always welcome.

Inevitably these criticisms reflect on the ongoing weaknesses of British main line Christian denominational mission strategies and ministry forms in urban communities, still dominated by top down approaches, book centred methods, and too many non representative leaders. O that new local advocates and leaders may arise to empower God's people in our urban communities.

David was a good man of generous and gentle spirit who displayed enormous courage as a leader and a prophet for justice and respect for all people. He was magnificently supported in his journey by his wife Grace, and their daughter Jenny. That so many of faith and no faith, deeply inspired by him, continue to fight the evil of injustice and oppression remains his lasting legacy.

Canon Neville Black MBE, Liverpool

Memorial Service

Over 3000 people gathered on May 23rd to give thanks and celebrate the life and work of David Sheppard, the Rt Revd Lord Bishop of Liverpool. A cold blustery wind blowing up from the Mersey accompanied those from the city and from parishes across the diocese as they queued to get into the enormous space.

All kinds of reunions were taking place. A strong contingent of former residents, staff and members of the Mayflower Family Centre were together again. Others in at the early stages of Frontier Youth Trust were there; some who formed the Evangelical Urban Training Project (Unlock); some of the original editorial group of the 'Christians in Industrial Areas Correspondence' (now part of Urban Bulletin); founders of the Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission. Archbishops, Bishops and clergy of all kinds, representatives of Liverpool's civic life, former Sussex County Cricket players rubbed shoulders with members of the congregations and individuals.

The Revd. Dr. John Newton, the Free Church Moderator — one of the triumvirate with David Sheppard and Archbishop Derek Warlock — spoke of the 'Merseyside Miracle'. Together the churches had worked for the wellbeing of the city in turbulent times — Militant included. Ordinary people knew them to be on their side.

Lord Puttnam, a fellow Labour Peer, read a message from Gordon Brown — for whom David Sheppard was a schoolboy

cricketing hero. The noble Lord recalled David's 'practical humanism' and his optimism, belief and humility and his ability to seek constructive ways forward. A former Rector of Liverpool, Nick Frayling, spoke of David's commitment to the 'communities left behind'. He read a message from Desmond Tutu who recalled David's opposition to apartheid especially in the campaign to stop the 1970 South African Test Tour to England. Jonnie Barclay, a former Captain of Sussex, remembered David's gift of leadership and ability to bring together a team and get the best out of them. Several people spoke of 'Faith in the City' of which David was Vice-Chairman.

Jenny Sinclair movingly spoke of her father as a kind and good man and thanked the many people, particularly 'the good people of Liverpool' who through their friendship and partnership helped shape the man her father became.

In his sermon, Sir Mark Hedley, High Court Judge and long associated with Shewsbury House in Everton, spoke of our Lord's intention in choosing His followers that they will 'produce fruit that will last'. Evidence of the Spirit's fruit in a life given over to Christ as a Cambridge undergraduate was plain to see all around the vast congregation. David's ordination Bible carried by a young member of Sefton Cricket Club was placed on the altar.

Applause broke out as coloured balloons rained down from the great tower after the Archbishop of Canterbury pronounced the blessing. Together we thanked God for a full life lived in commitment to God's good news for the poor in obedience to Christ. Lord Puttnam's taxi driver from the airport captured the mood: "He stopped us feeling sorry for ourselves." Liverpool's renaissance is there to be seen and felt.

Michael Eastman

FROM CURBS PROJECT...

Who do you think you are?

This is a 10 session resource kit designed for 5-11s. The kit doesn't try to explain in Bible pictures — just as Jesus didn't. Rather the sessions are intriguing enough to set the children on an adventure of discovery to learn more about Jesus ourselves, and what he can mean in our everyday lives. £10.00

BE-ATTITUDES

Have your kids got attitude? When they display it, what is your attitude? If these attitudes wore clothes what would they look like? The Be-attitudes encase some of the most fundamental principles of our faith. They are deeply challenging and outrageous. Children love riddles, extremes and opposites. This is a 10 session resource for 9-13s, comprising of games, thinking times, discussion drama. £10.00

'Understanding Compassion' is an invitation to explore both the nature of God's compassion as it affects discipleship and the work of Compassion (the international agency dedicated to the nurture of children caught up in poverty). £8.99

Contact: CURBS Project

REVIEWS

Theology by Heart: women, the church and God, by Ellen Clark-King. Publ. by Epworth Press, ISBN: 0 7162 0587 4.

Studies of 'ordinary people' and their views on a range of issues has been an integral part of urban social studies since Willmott and Young's classic study of Bethnal Green in the mid-1950s to which the author of the present work refers. Since then attention has turned to the 'spirituality' of 'ordinary people', thus bringing together two of the most difficult concepts of our time. What is 'spirituality'? Who is 'ordinary'?

Ellen Clark-King's study is similar in many respects to Bernadette Flanagan's book 'The Soul of the City', in which she examined the way people in a Dublin neighbourhood interpreted their spiritual beliefs. Ellen's study is of the St. Anthony's Estate in Newcastle-upon-Tyne where she and her husband worked as Anglican priests. The area was built for the early shipyard workers and comes high among deprived wards in England and Wales. Aware that she, a middle class feminist with an academic background, was, for the first time, living on an estate consisting almost entirely of white working class Geordies, she undertook a process of serious listening to her neighbours, and particularly to the women, to see what she, feminists and the wider church could learn from them. The result is this book, based on interviews with women in four local churches, two Anglican, one Roman Catholic and one Methodist. While she speaks early on about 'those on the outside of the church', it is church members who are the focus of the interviews and of the book.

The North American black writer Bell Hooks warned those who say to others 'no need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better', and Clark-King quotes this at length. She does her best to avoid it, though, while there are many quotations from the women, the bulk of the study is taken up with the author's commentary and reflections. She is also aware of the centrality of class, and of the tendency for western theologians to ignore class issues. Even 'social theologians' focus more on deprivation than on class, she rightly tells us.

There is a good description of the four churches before she moves on to look at the women's views on God, Jesus, Mary, death, and the church. Some of the findings are extremely interesting, and relevant way beyond Tyneside. These churches were not centres of family worship: it was far more common to see grandmothers and grandchildren together than to see mothers and their children. However, motherhood and family were central to the women's concerns. They had no problem about addressing God as 'Father', while female imagery and language played no part in their spirituality. The feminist concern with creation and 'bodily focus' played little role, and the natural world impinged 'only