

Christmas Greetings from Helen

Thank you once again for your incredible support this year as I continue to work for CMM. It has been another busy year, but one punctuated by God's grace and times of quietness and rest.



First things first: my sister Miriam got married to Tim on the Saturday after Easter. It was a brilliant day, and it was a privilege to read and to team up with Amy and Sarah to sing at the signing of the register. It is so good to see how Miriam and Tim are getting on with life together, and their amazing passion for Jesus. I don't think I've ever been to a more evangelistic wedding!

Other family highlights have included spending a few days on holiday in Suffolk with mum, dad, Deb, Jon, Bethan and Ioan. It was lovely to see Bethan's excitement at her birthday, although blowing out the candles needs a bit more work... I also saw mum and dad again a couple of weeks ago when I led another musical in a day in Port Talbot. It was such a treat to work with the singers there, including a wonderful Welsh male-voice section! We're looking forward to spending time with James' side of the family over Christmas, and then hosting all of my family for a couple of days between Christmas and New Year.

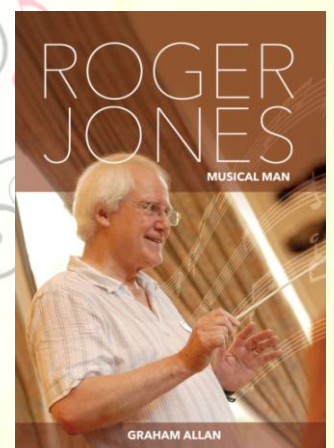


James' health still isn't 100% so please do pray for him. For a couple of years now he has struggled with fatigue and migraines. While we may not be able to go for long bike rides, walking is a good option, so we have enjoyed three walking holidays together – a couple of days in a cottage in Glaisdale in the North York Moors, a longer holiday in Austria at the end of the summer, and a few days in the Lakes in early November. Austria was an amazing experience; the weather wasn't quite as we hoped, but we still got in some great long days of walking and occasionally had

views from the mountain tops! While we were in the Lakes we had an amazing day spent walking the Fairfield Horseshoe – entirely above the clouds!

CMM work this year has been dominated by three major projects – Musical Man, Encourager and Barnabas. I mentioned in my letter last year about a biography written by Graham Allan from Penrith. The research work Graham had put in was extraordinary. My job was to edit and typeset the book, which wasn't always an easy task, but Graham was incredibly patient and everyone seems to be pleased with the final product – so much so, it has just had its first reprint.

Almost immediately after finishing work on Musical Man I was asked to typeset Alison Fuggle's first novel, 'The Encourager: Barnabas a novel'. Alison had already had others help with editing and proofing, so I mostly just had to format it for print. It was a fun project and Alison's book is a great read.





The biggest of the three projects was by far Roger's new musical, Barnabas. Once Roger and Alison had finalised the text and music, it was time to work on the book and CD. I was privileged to put together one of the backing tracks (with help on the drums from Tim), which was great fun. I loved devising the string and saxophone arrangement, and it was great to hear it performed at the premiere. I also gathered together a wonderful group of vocalists to sing in the choral harmonies on the album. I didn't sing myself (apart from a couple of tiny bits) but I did get to conduct and help the development of the music by increasing the depth of expression. It was incredibly hard work but totally worthwhile – and it was a real joy that one of those singers was my school music teacher, Chris. Great to have him on board!

I also organised the premiere of Barnabas, which was a bit hairy at times – I would have loved to have sold more tickets before the day itself! But on the day everything came together brilliantly – amazing soloists, dancers, choir, vocal group, instrumentalists, helpers and audience. I am so thankful for all who give their time to make events like this so special. Our next exciting big event for me to administrate will be a Barnabas Massed Choirs and Orchestral day in Tamworth – 8th October 2016. Get it in your diaries!



Away from the office I took part in a number of Worship Works and musical weekends, as well as two music weeks, and two tours of Scotland. I made a documentary of our tour to Scotland in June – check it out on the documentary section of our CMM YouTube channel.

I have mostly kept up with writing the CMM Blog too, so if you would like more detail about what we get up to and what's going on behind the scenes, do have a look at christianmusicministries.blogspot.co.uk

So thank you for reading this far, and thank you for your support. A special thanks from me this year must go to my amazing house group – EBRG, who are simply brilliant to pray, grow and learn with.

Looking forward to all that next year holds!

Helen

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God has provided for CMM amazingly over the last 30+ years, including the last 10 with me on staff. Please pray and ask God about supporting us in the future. I know he has so much more in his plans for the ministry.