

The Road



The Road, Vision Series, Issue 1 – November 2021

Welcome to this first edition of 'The Road', newsletter for Not Ashamed, a new organisation currently being established by me, Rev Simo (Rev Simon Faulks).

As many of you will be aware I am on sabbatical (study leave) from the end of October for three months. During this time, I'm exploring what God is saying and where he is leading for the future. At the beginning of February 2022, I will not be returning to my current role but continuing that journey. This letter is an introduction to that exploration, to ask for your prayer and support as we look to the way ahead!

What is Not Ashamed?

Not Ashamed is a new ministry currently working on discovering God's vision for the future (hence the 'vision series'). I am exploring God's call to creativity in discipleship, evangelism, training and ministry. In these early days the vision is being built around equipping and enabling churches and schools through events and training, providing training for the teaching of RE primarily (but not exclusively) on the topic of Christianity along with training and resources for collective worship and beyond.

I hope to be able to provide solutions and not just 'sell products/services' and so will be happy to explore with schools and churches ways in which I might be able to help/support their work. Some of this will be done through existing resources but we can also look together at how I might be able to create the tools that are right for a particular situation.

Why 'The Road'?



and their guest broke bread that they recognised Jesus.

The title is taken from two journeys - firstly two disciples after the first Easter, who travelled along the road home to Emmaus, confused by what they had seen and heard over the last few days when they were joined by a stranger who talked with them about the scriptures and what the prophets had written. Their eyes began to open, but it wasn't until they sat together for a meal

The second journey started out somewhat differently - Paul was on his way to Damascus, to round up and arrest Jesus' followers. He was startled by a bright light and a voice from heaven. His life was completely transformed by an encounter with Jesus through that vision.

Two journeys down roads that led to encounters with Jesus that changed lives - ultimately not just those lives but many others down the line and today.

'The Road' is the first steps of a newsletter for **Not Ashamed**, a ministry that we hope and pray will help equip, enable and support creative ministry that leads others to encounter Jesus. It's a journey with Jesus, looking back at how he has lead and looking forward to where he continues to lead. The idea is that this will become a quarterly newsletter with points for praise and prayer and hopefully ideas and resources to support others in ministry. This is currently the Vision Series at the beginning of the journey, exploring the foundations of the vision for the future ministry God is leading me into and asking you to pray with me on this journey.

This is the only issue I will send out to people from my own address book. If you would like to keep up to date then please sign up to the mailing list on the website (See the bottom of the next page).

The Vision so far...

As many of you reading this will know, some of the things I like to do are perhaps a little out of the ordinary: circus skills and illusion - certainly not normal 'vicar' activities!

One of the things I have tried to do over several years is explore more of what these skills and interests have to do with my call to ministry. This has given me some fantastic opportunities and led me to expand and explore areas where these things can cross over. I have had the opportunity through my youth and children's work and more latterly my role as a parish priest and continuing ministry in schools to develop storytelling, using these skills to help explore and illustrate some of the stories of the bible.

This has led to writing a one-man show for all ages as an outreach event that looks at stories of the bible and how they help us see God and finishing with a strong gospel message.



Other opportunities have led to writing and leading workshops on reading the Bible from a different perspective and thinking about how we might use that in preaching and storytelling.

Training in school for teachers on leading acts of worship, quiet spaces and thinking about what it is like to be a learner as well as teaching children on various issues of faith and leading collective worship.

Circus workshops in schools, holiday clubs and youth groups. One of the great advantages of these is it involves the young people trusting you, when they trust you with this they begin to listen more to what you might want to say later when you talk about faith.



For various reasons this last year or two has led me to do more thinking on this and a sense that God might be calling me to use these gifts more and a potential change in the focus of my ministry from parish based to a broader support role for the church using these gifts.

One of the other things I have been exploring is dyslexia, often thought of as a problem, a learning difficulty or special educational need. But being dyslexic has played a big part in making me who I am. There are areas where I struggle but of much greater value are the strengths it brings and this is beginning to be recognised more and more. I am therefore thinking about how I can use my experience to encourage both those with dyslexia and their families, changing perception from negative to something positive. I am trying to find ways to link in with the work of an organisation called 'Made by Dyslexia' as part of this. I have also been working on a book about my journey with dyslexia, it still needs some more work but I hope to be able to take this forward too.



Getting involved...

There are a few ways you can get involved and support this ministry, the first is please pray for God's leading and for us as a family as we listen and seek to follow. Secondly visit the website, sign up to the mailing list and have a look round while you are there. I would love your feedback and suggestions (and any corrections!); do share it with others who you think might be interested.

Over the coming months I hope to be able to put on some shows and workshops (offering substantial discounts till the end of February. If you would like to explore this possibility and/or find out about other ways you can support this vision & ministry you can visit the website or send me an email, details below.

Many thanks for you time, your prayers and your support.

God bless, Rev Simo

Rev Simo. Not Ashamed: Creative Discipleship
The Rectory, 7 Main Street, Mursley, Milton Keynes, MK17 0RT

Tel: 0333 339 8565

Email: rev-simo@notashamed.co.uk

Web: www.notashamed.co.uk