

# COMING ENGAGEMENTS 2009

At the time of going to press these are my engagements for the next four months. For up-to-date news of any additional meetings, visit [www.johnblanchard.org](http://www.johnblanchard.org). Please pray for God's enabling and blessing at these events — and if possible plan to attend any scheduled to be held near you.

Please note that because of Joyce's illness I may have to withdraw from a scheduled engagement at short notice, though hopefully this will not be the case. If you plan to attend I suggest you contact the organizers shortly before the date concerned.

## September

- 6(am) CRAIGAVON, Co. Armagh: Waringstown Presbyterian Church [Info: 028 3888 2654 or [pmccconnell@presbyterianireland.org](mailto:pmccconnell@presbyterianireland.org)]  
6(pm) PORTADOWN, Co. Armagh: St Mark's Parish Church, Portadown Christian Convention [Info: [gilly@edenderryce.org](mailto:gilly@edenderryce.org)]  
7 ARMAGH: Christian Golfers Conference — Captain's Day  
8\* BANGOR, Co. Down: Bethany Baptist Church [Info: 028 914 59211 or [pastor@bethanybaptist.co.uk](mailto:pastor@bethanybaptist.co.uk)]  
9\* DUNGANNON, Co. Tyrone: Dungannon Presbyterian Church [Info: 028 877 22125 or [asthompson@presbyterianireland.org](mailto:asthompson@presbyterianireland.org)]  
10\* COOKSTOWN, Co. Tyrone: Molesworth Presbyterian Church [Info: 028 867 6998 or [tgreer@presbyterianireland.org](mailto:tgreer@presbyterianireland.org)]  
17-20 ALBANIA: Meetings throughout the country and launching of Albanian translation of two further titles in the Popular Christian Apologetics series. [Info: [wdniven@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wdniven@hotmail.co.uk)]

## October

- 2\* SHALFORD, Surrey: Bethel Christian Assembly, Shalford Village Hall, Kings Road, Shalford, GU4 8LD [Info: 01483 454028 or [sagw50@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:sagw50@tiscali.co.uk)]  
5\* WALSALL, West Midlands: Walsall Independent Evangelical Church, Bath Street, Walsall, WS1 3DB [Info: 01922 612223 or [john@wiec.co.uk](mailto:john@wiec.co.uk)]  
6\* BROMSGROVE, Worcs: Welcome Hall, Woodrow Lane, Catshill, B61 0PO [Info: 01527 872126]  
7\* COVENTRY, West Midlands: Lower Ford Street Baptist Church, Coventry, CV1 5QJ [Info: 02476 670694 or [paulwatts@lfsbc.org.uk](mailto:paulwatts@lfsbc.org.uk)]  
8\* HINCKLEY, Leics: Mount Road Baptist Church, Hinckley, LE10 1AD [Info: 01455 234677 or [djbj@ellis30.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:djbj@ellis30.orangehome.co.uk)]  
9\* WOLVERHAMPTON, W. Midlands: West Park Church, Connaught Road, Wolverhampton, WV1 4PN [Info: 01902 427820 or [ianharrison265@btinternet.com](mailto:ianharrison265@btinternet.com)]  
10\* LEICESTER: Melbourne Hall, St Peter's Road, Leicester, LE2 1DB [Info: 0116 270 8410 or 0116 271 7067 or [urnamajulasokhi@ntlworld.com](mailto:urnamajulasokhi@ntlworld.com)]  
11(am) LEICESTER: Melbourne Hall, St Peter's Road, Leicester [Info as above]

*The rest of October is reserved for study, preparation and writing*

## November & December

*November & December are reserved for study, preparation and writing*

\* *Indicates a Popular Christian Apologetics meeting*

### JOIN THE TEAM!

Thank you for reading *Newsline*. If you have not seen it before and would like to receive future copies (by post or e-mail) please let me know at 'Sarnia', 81 Lambert Road, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 2QU. Telephone 01737 357501 E-mail: [jbsarnia@gmail.com](mailto:jbsarnia@gmail.com)



## The long farewell

My first visit to South Africa was in 1988 and in the last twenty-one years I have had the privilege of preaching hundreds of times in that wonderful country. I felt that a very fruitful tour in 2007 would be my last, but Christian Book Discounters, which does such superb work in making good Christian literature available throughout the country, persuaded me to return this year. I am delighted that I did!

As usual, the tour began in Gauteng, the nation's smallest province, but by some calculations the most densely populated, with over nine million people living



there. My opening engagements were an evening rally in **Horison** and the East Rand Pastors' Fraternal in **Bedfordview**, and on the next day the tour really got into gear. A 5.15 alarm call enabled me to be at the Seattle Coffee Shop, **Hyde Park**, for 'Thank God It's Friday'. For ten years 'TGIF' has been a weekly gathering for businessmen and others. I had spoken at it before, but this time the attendance was at least double any I had known, and people were virtually spilling out into the mall. The message was intently received and a lively question time capped a great start to the day.

'As much as I can, as well as I can, for as long as I can'

# ANOTHER TARTAN TOUR

Of all the times when a Popular Christian Apologetics tour appears on the horizon, none excites me more than when the destination is Scotland, perhaps in part because of the time I spent in the Hebrides as a wartime evacuee when the Germans invaded Guernsey. Be that as it may, I was delighted to board the flight to Glasgow and later in the day to meet up with Howard Williams for the beginning of the latest eight-day visit.

We began in the Lanarkshire village of **Kirkmuirhill**. This was my first return visit to Kirkmuirhill Church, where in 1984 Peter Anderson and I held a very fruitful evangelistic mission. It was good to meet many people who remembered it well and a great encouragement to talk to quite a number who became Christians at that time. These all helped to bring about a warm response to the ministry and an excellent beginning to the tour; I was strongly encouraged not to wait a further twenty-five years for the next visit!

A fairly short drive took us next to the parish church in **Chryston**, a village just north of Glasgow and where we held a similar event two years ago. Now under new leadership, and with a daughter church in Moodiesburn, the church has a busy and

effective schedule and had made excellent arrangements to provide a relaxed setting for our event. After the meeting, someone told me that a few years ago he had given a copy of *Does God believe in Atheists?* to a medical doctor, who came to faith through reading it. This reminded me of the many different settings in which God has graciously used the writing ministry over the years; just before the tour a converted Jew told me that he had bought *Right with God* in a charity shop and in reading it had come to faith in Christ!

Next, a much longer drive, this time to Inverness, and for another return visit, this time to the superb Inshes Church, led by Alistair Malcolm. Alistair's son is the minister at Chryston, so we were serving two generations of the same family in two settings on successive nights, a 'first' as far as we were concerned. A fine crowd, a great spirit and a fine Q and A session made this a special occasion.



conference was greatly appreciated it was unfortunate that it clashed with several major events in the town.

My second Sunday began with a 9.00am Family Bible Hour with twice the normal attendance and a packed morning service, both in **East London**, followed by a flight to Cape Town, in the Western Cape, for an evening in **Tokai**, where a huge crowd could hardly be squeezed into the building. Another full and fruitful day.

The final week had several highlights. These included speaking at three lunch-time meetings organized by City Partnership in hotels in **Cape Town** and **Somerset West**, all of which drew much larger numbers than usual. At the Somerset West meeting a man told me he had come to Christ reading *Right with God* while he was a student in Bristol. Another was an exhilarating meeting in **Stellenbosch**, where

80% of those attending were university students. I can hardly remember a more alert audience anywhere I have ever preached. Another highlight was the five-hour round trip to the Klein Karoo town of **Montagu**, where nearly 150 came from all over this rural area for two one-hour Friday morning sessions. There were also fine meetings in **Plumstead**, **Bellville** and **Goodwood**, where a man told me that he had read the Bible right through every year for the past twenty years, inspired to do so by reading the first edition of *How to Enjoy your Bible*. Returning to the Bible Institute of South Africa in **Kalk Bay** was a special delight, made even richer when someone told me that in 1991 a college lecturer had sent a copy of *Ultimate Questions* to every head of state in the world. Nor will I easily forget a superb



With Randal Macauley at Johannesburg Bible College

breakfast event organized in **Table View**, where I was again encouraged to give a full message on death and the afterlife.

My last day began on familiar territory, St James Church, **Kenilworth**, where I first preached twenty-one years ago. There were 250 at the 8.00am service and about 1,000 at 10.00am, providing a wonderful climax to a memorable tour. Before leaving for the flight home that evening I had time to ride up Table Mountain for a panoramic view over the Western Cape and quietly to praise the Lord for his enabling grace throughout all of my many visits to this wonderful part of the world.

# Joyce



Joyce has had a very difficult time recently, with a lot of pain during the last six weeks of a six-month break from chemotherapy.

After exhaustive tests, during which it was confirmed that there had been a significant increase in the tumour marker count, a different chemotherapy programme was started on 30 July. This began with an infusion at the hospital via a peripherally inserted catheter (a PICC line), then via a portable device for two days at home. Two days later this is removed by a district nurse and the two-week cycle starts again. The plan is for this programme to run for six months.

Joyce is coping fairly well with the expected side effects, though we will not be able to have a holiday or other break this year.

If you are on the internet, please visit the blog on the Home page of my web site — [www.johnblanchard.org](http://www.johnblanchard.org) — which is updated a little more frequently than *Newsline* will allow.

Joyce and I are constantly encouraged by the many letters, cards, e-mails and telephone calls from praying friends — and we are also aware of the kindness of those who are equally concerned but who feel it best not to swamp us! We are deeply and gratefully aware of countless Christians — and churches — upholding us both in prayer. I preached recently on the text, 'Is is not from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and good things come?' (Lam. 3:38) and we look to him for grace to live day by day in that assurance.

## Electronic quotations

*The Complete Gathered Gold*, the collection of 16,000 of the finest statements I have ever heard or read, continues to be in great demand, and is now available in a number of electronic formats, including versions from Olive Tree (PDA and hand helds), BibleSoft (Desktop software) and Wordsearch. The links are as follows:

<http://www.olivetree.com/search/search.php?query=+gathered+gold&search=1>

<http://store.biblesoft.com/SearchResults.asp?Search=gathered+gold>

<http://www.wordsearchbible.com/catalog/search.php?publisher=Evangelical+Press>

## THANK YOU!

My warmest thanks once again to friends who have recently sent ministry gifts through the CM Trust. Your fellowship is greatly appreciated. Gifts sent directly to my home address are always acknowledged personally at the time.

## Whatever else you give, give this!

When EP Books gave advance notice at this year's Carey Ministers' Conference of the publication of *JESUS: Dead or Alive*, one pastor said, 'Now that he has got Easter covered, what about Christmas?' This registered so strongly with me that I have since written a similar evangelistic booklet to help Christians to share their faith as Christmas approaches — and at any other time of the year!

The result is *Why on earth did Jesus come?* which will soon be published by EP Books. There has been widespread pre-publication interest in the booklet in the UK and elsewhere, and many churches will be ordering it in bulk. It has also attracted the following encouraging comments:



'Here is Blanchard at his best, tackling the Incarnation and showing us what it means and why it matters. Wonderfully clear, admirably succinct and profoundly helpful.'

— **Alistair Begg, Senior Pastor, Parkside Church, Cleveland, Ohio**

'I marvel at how much research John Blanchard fits into a small book. There is so much here that is fascinating — for example, the section on Mary and her place in the church mustn't be missed. Throughout the book, the reader is challenged as he presents arguments for and against popular versions of Jesus' story. I can't think of a better short read to give to a sceptical friend at Christmas.'

— **Rico Tice, Associate Minister, All Souls, Langham Place, London and Author of Christianity Explored.**

'Clear, concise and compelling. The reader is drawn in to a position where he or she can no longer view Jesus objectively, but is compelled to come to a verdict about him.'

— **Charles Price, Senior Pastor, Peoples Church, Toronto**

'John Blanchard has provided us with yet another effective evangelistic tool. Anyone looking for a Christ-centred evangelistic presentation that answers a number of common misconceptions need look no further.'

— **Terry Johnson, Senior Minister, Independent Presbyterian Church, Savannah, Georgia**

The booklet will retail at £1.50 for a single copy, but with gradually increasing discounts. Full details will soon be available on the EP Books website [www.epbooks.org](http://www.epbooks.org) and from EP Books, Faverdale North, Darlington DL3 0PH (Tel 01325 380 232). In the United States, visit [www.epbooks.org](http://www.epbooks.org) or phone/fax toll free 1-866-588-6778

### REGULAR NEWSLINE READERS PLEASE NOTE.

You will receive a free copy early in November, with a unique and exclusive offer.

From Hyde Park I went to the Baptist Theological College of Southern Africa in **Randtown**, where faculty and students packed the chapel for an hour's teaching on the relationship between science and Christianity. The Principal then shuffled the college's morning schedule to make way for another hour, given to further teaching and a superb question and answer time. Interaction with students added even more value to the visit. After a late lunch I was driven to **Boskruijn** for a rally in a charismatic church that never has a midweek meeting. To our great encouragement about 300 people came and the pastor spoke of having used *Ultimate Questions* widely over the years. There was an exceptional response to the message and to the extensive book table provided by CBD. It had been quite a day!

Another early start on the following day took me to **Blairgowrie**. I had been there several times before, but this time the format was unusual (and unique for me). After 100 people had finished the first course of a superb breakfast the meal was suspended for a full-blown message on death and the afterlife before the main course was served. To my surprise, the format worked wonderfully well and the morning ended on a high note when a man told me he had come to faith in Christ while reading *Right with God* twenty-eight years ago. A good evening rally in **Germiston** brought a very worthwhile day to an end.

Yet another early start on my first Sunday, this time for a long drive to **Edenvale** for services at 7.45 and 9.30. About 700 people attended the two services, at which I preached evangelistic messages, and CBD later reported an astonishing response to the books, DVDs and CDs they made available — greater than on any single day in any of my previous tours. At night I preached to 400 in **Honeyridge**, and was encouraged to hear testimonies from several people whose lives had been significantly touched by my ministry over the years.

Engagements in the days that followed included rallies in **Muldersdrift** and **Honeyridge**, where I also spoke at a Pastors Fraternal. South Africa's General Election was held on 22 April and we feared that this might affect attendance at **Brackenhurst**, but this was not the case and 300 listeners meant that the beautifully extended premises were well used. After the meeting a man told me he had been converted while reading *Right with God* at Swansea University, and another told me that he and his mother had come to faith reading *Ultimate Questions*.

At Johannesburg Bible College, **Johannesburg**, I shared an apologetics conference called 'Thinking. Connected' with Ranald Macaulay, Francis Schaeffer's son-in-law, who currently co-ordinates the work of Christian Heritage, in Cambridge. I greatly appreciated his input, which majored on the history (and loss) of Christian apologetics in the modern church: very illuminating!

A well-attended rally in **Midrand** closed out the Gauteng leg of the tour and I flew to the Eastern Cape (my first time there) for engagements in **East London** and **King William's Town**. A packed church in East London, with an excellent age range, was followed by a disappointing attendance in 'King' where I took the two sessions of a conference organized by Dumisani Theological Institute. DTI does a great work (some of it in the building in which the anti-apartheid campaigner Steve Biko was arrested in the nineteen-seventies, prior to his death while in custody) and while the

To help in making an early start the next day we had booked B & B at a hotel in Aberdeenshire — and soon wished we hadn't! No evening food on arrival, a dingy room, curtains that didn't come close to shutting out the late daylight, uncomfortable beds that kept us awake most of the night, no hot water for a morning shower and breakfast service that began long after we had to leave the next day. All part of the joys of itinerant ministry!

Our next stop was Deeside Christian Fellowship Church, **Aberdeen**, and with not a single café on the way a cup of coffee was all that broke a long fast before the 9.30 service, followed by another before a second service at 11.30. It is always a privilege to have a share in the ministry of DCFC under the leadership of Jeremy McQuoid and each of our four engagements there (the Sunday night service was followed by a Popular Christian Apologetics meeting on Monday) was exceptionally well attended, with very positive feedback.

In **Peterhead**, the Baptist Church had set up a two-course 'meal and message' at the Palace Hotel, a similar arrangement to that on our previous visit. Once again there was a good, mixed attendance and interaction. One person I met told me that she had been converted to Christ reading *Right with God*, and had then given it to a friend who had also come to faith.

We began to head south with a visit to **Dundee** and a meeting at Logie & St John's (Cross) Church of Scotland. I felt it right to end the meeting on a particularly urgent evangelistic note and was encouraged to learn afterwards that a good number of non-Christians were present.

Our last stop was at the historic High Kirk in **Stevenston**, North Ayrshire. The present building, towering over the town, replaces one built in 1670. The minister, Scott Cameron, was the 'victim' of his wife's plan for a short break to celebrate his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, but he had enthusiastically prepared the way for us and in his absence we had an exceptionally fine meeting on a glorious summer evening. It was a delightful way to end the tour — and had us thinking about when the next one might be!



Howard Williams busy in Aberdeen