



WYCLIFFE HALL

THE NEW RENAISSANCE PROJECT

2024-2025 GROWTH REPORT



BIBLICAL TOUCHSTONE:

THE VISION FOR “A NEW CHRISTIAN RENAISSANCE”

Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes ... On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.

EZEKIEL 47:9, 12 (NRSV)

We want to see an outpouring of Christian thinking, leadership and creativity that heals and rejuvenates society in profound ways across wide geographic areas. Such outpourings occurred in seventh-century Northumberland and Hispania, in eighth- and ninth-century Westphalia, in twelfth century Western Europe, and seminally in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy. The metaphor of rebirth, or *Renaissance*, has come to be used of these periods of history. These moments in history remind us of the life-giving, healing rivers of Genesis 2, Ezekiel 47 and Revelation 22.

A White-throated Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*) collecting food for its chicks. Taken in County Durham, April 2021. © Christopher Blakey

Dear Friends,

In a period characterised by global turmoil, political polarisation, and personal anxiety,

- some believe we should **retreat** into safe Christian enclaves (c.f. Dreyer, *The Benedict Option*), and as a residential Christian community Wycliffe Hall could provide such a refuge;
- others argue that what we need is a political **restoration** of a previous, supposedly more Christian, cultural epoch, and we certainly hope to see Christian men and women serving in politics;
- a few are seeing the first glimmering of **revival**, albeit a “Quiet Revival” for now, and, to quote the title of a book by former Wycliffe Hall Tutor, Michael Green, we certainly believe that *When God Breaks In, Revival Can Happen Again!*

However, we sense a particular call to foster a **New Christian Renaissance**.

That calling would not make sense, the vision would not be realisable, without the foundations provided by Wycliffe Hall’s 150 years of faithful service in training and sending church leaders; by the brilliant teaching and research of our current tutorial fellowship; by the dedicated labours of our support staff; and by the energy of our international student body.

We want to be good stewards of this history, of this fellowship, and of the remarkable institutional situation that God has granted us: Wycliffe Hall is *both* a Christian community in the evangelical Anglican tradition that starts each day in corporate worship, prayer and study of Scripture, *and* a part of the University of Oxford, one of the world’s great educational foundations and a global, cultural brand.

The celebrated sociologist, James Davison Hunter, has observed that cultural change often arises from small organisations at the edges of major institutions – this is the place where the possibility of creative innovation

and broad societal impact come together. So, we believe God has provided the perfect location from which to foster a New Christian Renaissance:

Transformational scholarship, leadership and culture, born out of Christian community, offering the Truth, Beauty and Goodness of the Gospel to the world.

This is not a small task and it is not one that will be achieved quickly or cheaply. Nonetheless, we are encouraged by God’s gracious provision of resources and opportunities in the first phase of our endeavour. And we want to thank you for the part you have played by praying, encouraging and giving towards these initiatives.

In this first phase, we have been in ‘start-up mode’, embedding the New Renaissance Project vision within Wycliffe Hall, and collaborating with partners who share the vision to deliver the wide range of activities you will read about below. As you read, we hope you will see the seeds and, indeed, the first fruits of our attempts to faithfully follow God’s call in the New Renaissance Project. You will also find brief introductions to some of our ‘Biblical Touchstones’. These are passages we are wrestling with and drawing on as we attempt to ensure we deliver on this vision in a Christ-like, God-honouring way.

We are hugely grateful for your friendship, your support and your prayers and hope you will be encouraged.

In Christ,

Jonathan Brant

REVD DR JONATHAN BRANT, DIRECTOR OF THE NEW RENAISSANCE PROJECT, WYCLIFFE HALL



IMPACT

WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR

50+
EVENTS

INCLUDING: Concerts, film-screenings, book-launches, public conversations, conferences

IMPACT: Showcasing the best of Christian scholarship, leadership and culture, inspiring, informing, elevating the hearts, minds and spirits of Christians and non-Christians drawn from the University, the city and the world.

2000+
ATTENDANCES

INCLUDING: Academics, artists, authors, business leaders, church leaders, entrepreneurs, musicians, undergraduate and postgraduate students, university leaders

IMPACT: Building a reputation as open and welcoming to the local and global community, and as an important nexus for cutting-edge thought, leadership and creativity.

20+
EVENT PARTNERS

INCLUDING the Centre for Cultural Witness; Christians in Business; Developing a Christian Mind; Faith Driven Investors; Global Faculty Initiative; Hodder Faith; Hymns Ancient & Modern; Oxford Pastorate; Plough Magazine; Praxis; Premier Christianity; Templeton Religion Trust; The Veritas Forum.

IMPACT: Multiplying the number of people we can influence through our events by leveraging the expertise and reach of other organisations.

30+

PRESENTATIONS
INTRODUCING
THE NEW
RENAISSANCE PROJECT
TO 50,000+ PEOPLE

INCLUDING: Sermons and lectures in large churches across the world; academic conferences; meetings of church leaders; interviews on popular podcasts and radio programmes; supporter and donor gatherings; and a Wycliffe reunion in Houston, Texas.

IMPACT: Developing and deepening the New Renaissance Project vision through engagement with other communities; reaching large, dispersed audiences across the UK, USA, South Korea and Hong Kong; inspiring women and men around the world with the vision and message of the New Renaissance Project.

£900,000+

IN NEW FUNDING FOR
OUR PROJECTS AND
PARTNER
INITIATIVES

INCLUDING: Funds from the Templeton Religion Trust for a major research project (p7);

Grant from the Church of England Resourcing Ministry Fund to launch Theomousikos (p18-19);

Gifts for Developing a Christian Mind (p7);

Donations from individuals and trusts specifically for the New Renaissance Project.

IMPACT: Early financial support demonstrates the confidence and commitment of a global community of funders who believe in the New Renaissance Project team and vision.

NEW PERSONNEL
IN SCHOLARSHIP,
LEADERSHIP AND
THE ARTS

INCLUDING:

DR DRU JOHNSON, Templeton Senior Research Fellow (p7)

DR JOY CHOI, Associate Research Fellow in Biochemistry (p8)

JEAN KABASOMI, New Renaissance Project Leadership Consultant (p12)

DR CHRISTOPHER BLAKEY, Theomousikos Coordinator (p19)

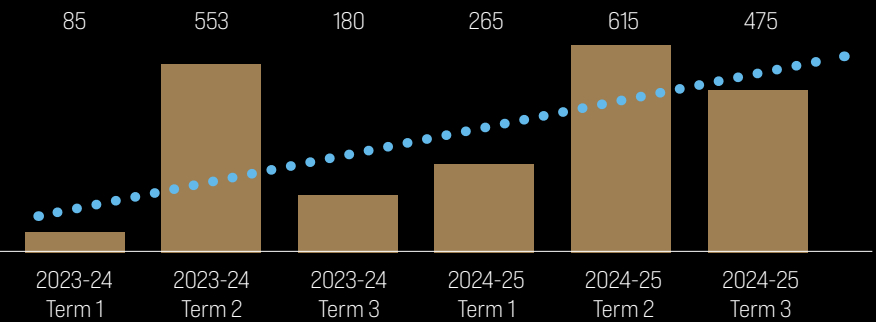
MICHEAL FLAHERTY, Filmmaker in Residence (p17)

SANDRA McCRACKEN, Songwriter in Residence (p17)

TIM NICHOLSON, Musician in Residence (p17)

IMPACT: Bringing in experience and energy from around the world, providing a platform and opportunity for diversely gifted Christians to help deliver the New Renaissance Project vision.

NEW RENAISSANCE PROJECT EVENTS ATTENDANCE BY TERM



BIBLICAL TOUCHSTONE:

NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT

He said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts. What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall bring out the top stone amid shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"'

Zechariah 4:6-7 (NRSV)

We believe a recognition of our own limitations, 'not by might nor by power', and a reliance on God, 'but by my spirit', is entirely compatible with hard-thinking, hard-working and carefully measured impact. After all, Zerubbabel and Jeshua still had to plan, acquire materials, employ craftspeople and labour with blood, sweat and tears (Ezra 3:6-7) in order to see the Temple rebuilt. This is a creative, generative tension because the relationship between divine agency and human agency is not linear, win-lose, but win-win.



BIBLICAL TOUCHSTONE:

CHRIST THE POWER AND WISDOM OF GOD

For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:25 (NRSV)

'Not many of you were scholars' (NIV), says Paul to the Corinthians. But Oxford is one of the few places in the world where that may not be true of the Christian community! Many Oxford scholars are Christians. But that in no way negates the central message of this passage: our wisdom will never be more than foolishness compared to the wisdom of God; our (academic) strength will never match even the greatest weakness of God. Therefore, our mission is to raise up new generations of humble Christian scholars who will dedicate and submit their academic service, their research and their teaching, to "Christ the power and the wisdom of God".



SCHOLARSHIP

Oxford University, repeatedly ranked in the 'top ten' universities worldwide (Number 1 in Times World University ranking 2024), is the oldest university in the English-speaking world and has been a seat of learning since medieval times. As a faithful Christian community within the University, one that continues to practice an ancient rhythm of prayer and study, Wycliffe Hall is uniquely well positioned to foster a New Christian Renaissance.

Building on the research already being published by our excellent Tutorial Fellows and our growing Graduate Student body, we aim to cultivate a community of expert Christian researchers based in our new Research Hub at 8 Norham Gardens and working across disciplines to bring biblical thinking to bear on some of the most pressing challenges faced in the world today. We are only beginning but, nonetheless, have made exciting progress:

PROGRAMMES

DEVELOPING A CHRISTIAN MIND (DCM) MOVING TO WYCLIFFE HALL

In addition to running two annual conferences equipping postgraduate students to integrate their faith and their intellectual vocation, DCM is probably the largest network of Christian academics at any university in the world. Vision- and mission-fit with the scholarship stream of the New Renaissance vision led DCM to select Wycliffe Hall as an ideal partner and institutional base for this initiative. In addition to the work at Oxford, DCM is expanding to US Universities, including Harvard and MIT, and the research triangle of universities, Duke, North Carolina, and NC Chapel Hill.



Wycliffe Hall tutors Max Baker-Hytch, Erin Heim and former principal Alister McGrath speaking at the DCM conference

ABRAHAMIC THEISTIC ORIGINS PROJECT (ATOP) LAUNCHED AT WYCLIFFE HALL

Hosting this project brings important academic, financial and network benefits to Wycliffe Hall. Based on a generous grant from the Templeton Religion Trust, ATOP draws together multidisciplinary teams of academics in a collegial atmosphere to explore the question of how the Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) and the evolutionary sciences intersect and what each can learn from the other. This builds upon previous work done by our Principal, Michael Lloyd, and other Oxford scholars in the *Evolutionary Theodicy* project.



Revd Dr Dru Johnson, Templeton Senior Research Fellow



PEOPLE

JEONGYOON (JOY) CHOI

Alongside theologians and ethicists, we are delighted to have been able to welcome our first scientist into our Research Fellowship.

Dr Jeongyoon (Joy) Choi writes:

“I am a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Biochemistry at Oxford, investigating X-chromosome inactivation in female mammalian cells. During my undergraduate years in South Korea, my friends and I received a vision of doing research with the Holy Spirit as a form of worship. We prayed every morning for each other’s research and for our departments and university. Each term we held a focused day to present our research-in-progress and spent an extended time in prayer, listening to God. Since then, I have been enthusiastic about imagining the Kingdom of God advancing in academia. I am truly excited about the New Renaissance Project at Wycliffe and honoured to be part of the research community.”

Dr Joy Choi

SCHOLARSHIP
EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

BOOK LAUNCH: Nicholas Wolterstorff, Terry Halliday and Global Faculty Initiative, *Justice and Rights*

We were delighted to host this Global Faculty Initiative (GFI) book launch in partnership with the Oxford Pastorate and Langham Publishing. The event marked the first publication from GFI, a network of over 170 Christian scholars at research-led universities worldwide.

Jonathan Brant (New Renaissance Project Director, Wycliffe Hall) opened the event welcoming more than 70 guests. GFI leader Professor Terry Halliday (Sociology, American Bar Foundation), introduced the book. Joining us virtually, Professor Nicholas Wolterstorff (Philosophy and Theology, Yale) discussed the importance of integrating questions of justice within Christian scholarship. A panel discussion and Q&A with senior academics considered what this might look like, in practice, in their particular fields.

This event allowed us to contribute to the equipping of leading Christian scholars world-wide, helping them to ensure their faith informs and impacts their teaching and their research.

BOOK LAUNCH: Sarah Williams, Josephine Butler

BOOK LAUNCH: Michael Lloyd with Rachel Atkinson, *Image Bearers*

BOOK LAUNCH: Max Baker-Hytech, *God and the Problem of Evidential Ambiguity*

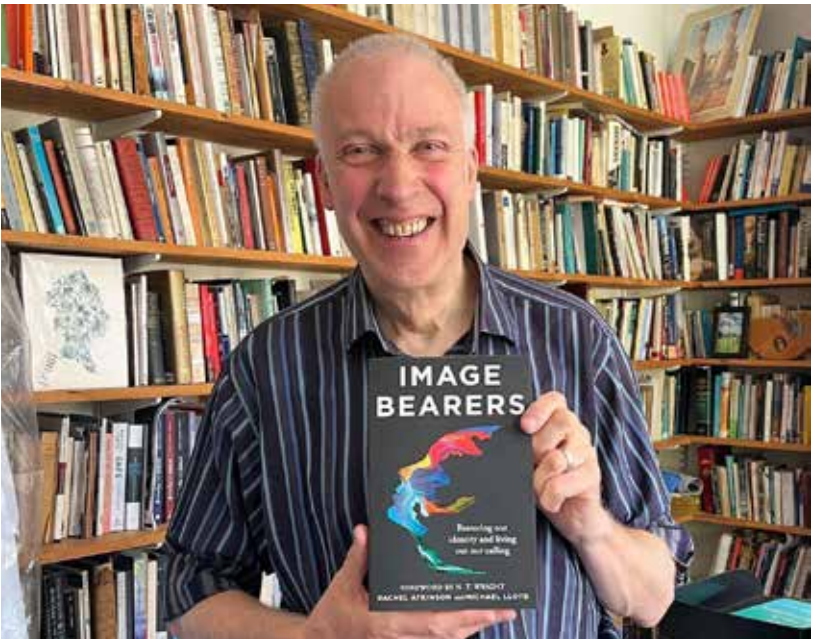
LECTURE: Dr Christopher Wadibia, *Global Christianity: Mission, Politics and Intercultural Challenges*



Justice and Rights, Professor Terry Halliday



Max Baker-Hytech with a Wycliffe doctoral student



Michael Lloyd (*Image Bearers*)

BIBLICAL TOUCHSTONE:

THE LORD LOOKS ON THE HEART

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the Lord.' But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart'.

1 Samuel 16:6-7 (NRSV)

We seek to recruit exceptional people and help them as they grow in their leadership gifts. In this Christian context, "exceptional" must mean Christ-centred, servant-hearted, humble, as much as gifted, talented, successful. And we cannot be elitist but must constantly be open to exceptional people coming from unexpected backgrounds – 'for the Lord does not see as mortals see'.

LEADERSHIP

Good leadership of our schools, hospitals, governments, corporations and churches is essential for the flourishing of individuals and of society and for a New Christian Renaissance. Sadly, today, Christian leaders are not considered any more trustworthy, perhaps less trustworthy, than their non-believing peers.

VISION

Building on 150 years of faithful service in training and sending Christian leaders into local church and global mission, we now seek to play our part in equipping and releasing Christians called into leadership in many different institutions, sectors and roles around the world. In order to restore trust in Christian leadership and see Christian leaders serving for the good of the world, we are looking to support:

- The formation of young leaders as they take academic degrees at the University of Oxford, including in the Saïd Business School and the Blavatnik School of Government
- The development of entrepreneurs as they seek to set up Kingdom-focused, redemptive businesses and social enterprises
- The refreshing, re-envisioning and re-commissioning of mid-career leaders who might come to us for a few weeks or a few months of sabbatical at key decision or inflection points in their careers
- The gathering of short-term cohorts of senior leaders to learn, from one another and from senior University of Oxford experts, how they might use their positions and influence to have the greatest possible impact for Christ in their fields



PEOPLE

JEAN KABASOMI

Due to the generosity of donors at last year's Summer School Gala Dinner, we have been able to employ Jean Kabasomi as a part-time Consultant to the New Renaissance Project, focusing on the Leadership stream of the project's activity through the 2024/25 academic year.

Jean has almost a decade of experience working in financial services, primarily investment banking, in London. She has worked in a variety of roles including chief of staff, banking operations, client

services, transaction reporting, and policy. She has served global banks such as Morgan Stanley, Credit Suisse, UBS, Barclays and HSBC. She has a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Oxford, where she served as Class President and organised a Faith and Business conference, plus a BA in Theology from Durham University and a Masters in Biblical Studies from the University of Edinburgh.

Through the year, Jean has: helped us focus our thinking and strategy in this area; enabled us to expand our relationship network in the business and entrepreneurial community, including with contacts at the Saïd Business School; helped us to develop partnerships with organisations such as Praxis, Christians in Business, and Faith Driven Investors; and played a vital role planning and delivering the year's leadership-focused activities, including our Leadership over Lunch sessions, and our workshop on Servant Leadership at the Christians in Business Conference.



Christians in Business participants

PROGRAMMES

LEADERSHIP OVER LUNCH: Over the last two terms, we were visited by senior leaders from a wide range of contexts, who were willing to engage our students and faculty in conversation about good, Christian leadership. Contributors included:

PAUL MADSON – President and CEO of the Global Training Network

ADORA LOVESTRAND – Alumna; Principal, Venture Capital at Sovereign's Capital

BRUCE FAWCETT – President and Vice Chancellor of Crandall University, Canada

MIKE WOODRUFF – Lead Pastor of Christ Church, Chicago, and CEO of Lakelight Institute, USA

SARAH BOND – Co-Founder and CEO of Selka Health, Oxford

CHANTAL BACON – Alumna; Founder and CEO of CornerstoneX, an AI-metahuman start-up



Female ordinands

LEADERSHIP EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

CHRISTIANS IN BUSINESS CONFERENCE: CHAD LION-CACHET AND PARTNERS

The New Renaissance Project played a significant role partnering in the first Christians in Business Conference held at Keble College, Oxford. Wycliffe Hall's Senior Research Fellow, Rt Revd Professor NT Wright, gave the opening keynote address; Jonathan Brant, Jean Kabasomi and Wycliffe alumna and entrepreneur Chantal Bacon led a session on Servant Leadership; and Wycliffe Hall hosted the networking reception for all participants at the end of the day.

The conference explored how Christians can work together to significantly increase our impact by focusing on four key areas:

- Searching Scripture to apply the Gospel more deeply to business
- Serving each other generously, demonstrating servant leadership
- Sharing the Gospel through authentic relationships and conversations
- Sustaining each other through partnership and mentorship over the long-term

With around 100 business people and business-focused ministries inspired and resourced, the organisers expect the impact to be felt in workplaces across the country.

BOOK LAUNCH: BISHOP GRAHAM TOMLIN, *BLAISE PASCAL*

We were privileged to host the Oxford launch of Bishop Graham Tomlin's new book on Blaise Pascal. While Blaise Pascal never led a nation, a political movement, or even a church, he used his formidable intellectual gifts to such effect that the subtitle of the book is, 'The Man Who Made the Modern World'. This kind of thought-leadership by faithful, passionate Christians, like Blaise Pascal, will be essential in the fostering of a new Christian Renaissance. Bishop Graham Tomlin (once Vice-Principal at Wycliffe Hall) is himself one of the most compelling Christian voices speaking, writing and offering Christian thought-leadership in our cultural moment.



Graham Tomlin

Jean Kabasomi

BIBLICAL TOUCHSTONE:

TREASURE IN CLAY JARS

For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.

2 Corinthians 4:6-7 (NRSV)

While the New Renaissance Project is committed to artistic expressions of truth, beauty and goodness, and hopes to shine forth the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, we know that no human creation, initiative, institution, party, nation or period of history is free from sin, brokenness, distortion. We have nothing but clay jars, frequently broken jars. So, the New Renaissance Project is not aligned with any political party or project, does not nostalgically seek to return to any golden age of Christian culture and recognises its own implication in the sinfulness and brokenness of our fallen world.



Ceramic works by David Clifton



CULTURE

Building on the remarkable breadth of output of our permanent Artist in Residence, David Clifton – musician, ceramicist and painter – we seek to become a hub and a catalyst for the best of Christian culture-making. We are already growing our creative community, including through welcoming exceptional Composers, Songwriters, Musicians and Filmmakers in Residence. And we have received significant funding from the Church of England to set up, launch and pilot a new training programme for church musicians and worship leaders. Our vision is for a creative community, based here at Wycliffe Hall, creating art and culture that is born out of Christian study, prayer and worship, and informed by the very best of academic biblical and theological research.

CULTURE EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

FILM LAUNCH: THE END OF HUMANITY

In partnership with the Centre for Cultural Witness, we launched *The End of Humanity*, a thoughtful documentary offering an intellectually and aesthetically stimulating engagement with questions around what it is to be human. The event included a panel discussion involving Wycliffe doctoral student Lizibeth Fischer and Research Fellow Clair Linzey, alongside the filmmakers and Simon Cross (the Church of England's lead on AI).



SPEAKER EVENT: PLOUGH MAGAZINE – KATJA HOYER IN CONVERSATION

Dr Katja Hoyer, a German historian and journalist, spoke at Wycliffe Hall on her article for *Plough Magazine*, 'Why We're Still Atheists.' Dr Hoyer examined why the established church failed to revive after the fall of the Berlin Wall, asking whether the experience of the church in East Germany is being repeated in slow motion across the West today. Her remarkable openness about her own experience of growing up under atheism, combined with her insightful analysis, led to lively, engaging and challenging discussion. Wycliffe Hall's ministry trainees were particularly appreciative of the way this event helped them to understand the mindset and self-perception of a generation growing up with little experience of Christian faith.



LIVE RECORDING: CS LEWIS PODCAST WITH ALISTER MCGRATH AND RUTH JACKSON

This recording of the *CS Lewis Podcast* was very much a Wycliffe Hall affair. Podcast host Ruth Jackson studied theology at Wycliffe Hall as an undergraduate, while Professor Alister McGrath, the podcast’s resident expert, was Principal of the Hall from 1995 to 2004. Jonathan Brant introduced the New Renaissance Project, extending our reach to a wide audience: Premier’s podcasts, including *Ask NT Wright Anything* with Wycliffe’s Senior Research Fellow, have been downloaded millions of times.



Alister McGrath and Ruth Jackson recording in Wycliffe Hall chapel

taking part in our termly guest artist shows. The works on display ranged from pottery, oil pastels and paintings to collage, ink drawings, sculpture and landscape photography.



Choir

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND: NASHVILLE COMES TO OXFORD!

David Clifton hosted Nashville friends and fellow musicians Sandra McCracken, Daniel Kimbro, Taylor Leonhardt and legendary bass player Byron House for a wonderful evening of musical performances and sharing songs together in the style of the renowned Bluebird Café ‘Songwriters in the Round’ evenings, Nashville. The event attracted people from far and wide, including international visitors to Oxford, and raised money for Love Burundi, a charity supporting the funding and theological education of ordinands in one of the world’s poorest countries.



Nashville Comes to Oxford

PEOPLE

SANDRA McCracken and **TIM NICHOLSON**, Songwriters and Worship Leaders in Residence: Normally based in Nashville, they spent Trinity term 2025 with us. They led Chapel worship, participated in hugely popular concerts at Wycliffe Hall and supported worship leaders in our community. Their particular genre specialties include folk, gospel, and hymn traditions that weave together storytelling and Scripture.



COMING UP:

MICHEAL FLAHERTY, Filmmaker in Residence: A highly respected and successful film producer, Founder and long-time President of Walden Media, makers of the *Chronicles of Narnia*, *Amazing Grace* and other popular films. Over the next few years, Micheal will lead seminars and workshops to equip young filmmakers, offer expertise to support the dissemination of research by Christian academics and use his networks and influence to help us to popularise and infuse the work of the New Renaissance Project into the wider culture.



Micheal Flaherty with Wycliffe Hall students in 2024

LAUNCHING THEOMOUSIKOS

A NEW PROGRAMME EQUIPPING MUSICIANS FOR CHURCH MINISTRY

We have recently been awarded a large grant by the Church of England to help us to launch and pilot Theomousikos, a unique formation experience to cultivate theological depth, artistic excellence and multi-dimensional diversity in congregational music and worship leaders.

As a part of our New Renaissance Project vision, this initiative will help us to equip the Church to engage intelligently, creatively, winsomely, humbly with our society again, and to offer it a better song to sing.

The Theomousikos programme is for anyone who wants to grow in their preparedness to serve the church and its mission through music. It will form capable and equipped leaders – both lay and ordained – who are available to serve and lead local communities in encouraging missional discipleship, aiding the church in becoming younger and more diverse. People may join the programme as part of their training for church leadership, worship ministry or youth and children's ministry. The programme will be tailored both for those just starting out in their calling and for those who already have

substantial experience but want the opportunity to deepen their theology and improve their craft for greater kingdom impact.

The Church's musical tradition has often grown and developed within intentional communities – from the Acts of the Apostles, through the monastic foundations, Cathedral choirs and summer festivals – committed to a common life of study, prayer and worship together. The Theomousikos programme attempts to recover this tradition by providing a space for women and men to develop their musical callings and gifts amid deep, formative Christian community at Wycliffe Hall, including a daily rhythm of corporate prayer, worship and shared mealtimes.

PRELUDE: EXPLORING WORSHIP

We shared the vision for Theomousikos with the public through an interactive evening of music, worship and conversation. Hosted by Jonathan Brant, David Clifton, Sandra McCracken and Tim Nicholson, the event attracted guests from across Oxfordshire who were excited to hear about the programme and contribute their thoughts and reflections. We were encouraged to see strong engagement from the audience and a clear appetite for this kind of programme.



Exploring Worship

INTRODUCING OUR NEW THEOMOUSIKOS COORDINATOR, DR CHRISTOPHER BLAKEY

Wycliffe Hall is delighted to welcome **Dr Christopher Blakey**, who brings a wealth of experience to the new role of Theomousikos Co-ordinator.

Dr Blakey's research and teaching expertise is in the relationship between music and theology, especially in the history of theological discourse on music and in the theological analysis of music. He recently completed his PhD at Durham University, looking at 'Natural Theology and the Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams'. He has also authored a chapter in the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Music and Christian Theology*.

Whilst at Durham, he held a choral scholarship at St John's College; he then served as interim Director of Music at St. John's College and Cranmer Hall, training ordinands with wide-ranging musical backgrounds to lead choral services. He also contributed significantly to the *International Network for Music Theology*, a global research collaboration founded in Durham and Oxford.

His lifelong commitment to using his musical gifts in the service of evangelical worship is born from a deep personal dedication to worship and a sense of calling. A proficient instrumentalist, singer, and composer, he has served as a worship leader and musician in evangelical church communities for over twenty years and trained others in these roles.

Dr Blakey says: "I am delighted to be co-ordinating this exciting new programme at Wycliffe Hall. My vision for Theomousikos is of an accessible programme that is practical and theoretical in both theology and music. It is my hope that the programme will help to form creative, collaborative, missional leaders and thinkers, working towards musical excellence to the glory of God."



Dr Blakey is also a keen wildlife photographer; you can see an example of his work on page 2 of this report



BIBLICAL TOUCHSTONE:

CALLED TO FAITHFULNESS NOT SUCCESS

I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service.

1 Timothy 1:12 (NRSV)

What if some were unfaithful? Will their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?

Romans 3:3 (NRSV)

Not even faithfulness is within human grasp, as practically every biographical narrative in all of Scripture testifies. Fortunately, God is faithful to us, even when we fall short. Nonetheless, faithful service is our call and should be our goal. We should not pursue success as an end in itself because success is never within our grasp, and the pursuit of it can lead to disordered desires and actions, and, frequently, to unintended and negative consequences.



LOOKING AHEAD

A FULL PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Partnerships developed to date mean that we are now planning a full programme of New Renaissance Project activities through the 2025-2026 academic year and can select the most strategic and impactful opportunities from among a wide range of possibilities. We are currently planning events, conferences and labs in partnership with *Plough Magazine*, Premier Christianity, Developing a Christian Mind, Global Faculty Initiative, Christians in Business and Praxis, among others.

PILOTING THEOMOUSIKOS

2025/26 will also be the pilot year of our new Theomousikos programme for congregational music and worship leaders. We will offer our current student body the opportunity to register for the course, as well as making programmes and special events available to the wider public.

NEW RENAISSANCE PROJECT GLOBAL LAUNCH CONFERENCE

Finally, we are delighted to report that we are in the initial planning stages for what we hope will be our first global conference in March 2027, inviting hundreds of delegates to Oxford to participate in one of three content streams (Scholarship, Leadership, Culture & Arts) and to officially launch the next phase of the New Renaissance Project.



The chapel's east window



PRINCIPAL'S REFLECTION

"The Italian Renaissance is sometimes seen as western society beginning to break free from the constraints of Christian faith. I believe that, actually, Christian faith was in many ways the catalyst for that extraordinary outpouring of creativity and intellectual vigour – 'not the brakes, so to speak, but the motor', as the art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon puts it. And I long for Christian faith to be the catalyst of a similar outpouring today. So I am deeply encouraged by all that has been happening already at Wycliffe, under Jonathan Brant's leadership, to let the energy of faith loose again in today's world. In the person of Christ and in the biblical worldview, we have the foundations on which a saner and more harmonious society can be built, and truth, goodness and beauty can take their proper place in the hearts and minds and interactions of this generation."

Revd Dr Michael Lloyd, Principal, Wycliffe Hall

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BE PART OF THE NEW RENAISSANCE PROJECT



Discover more ways to get involved at
www.wycliffe.ox.ac.uk/renaissance



WYCLIFFE HALL

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A PERMANENT PRIVATE HALL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD