

**Life of the late Revd Dr Gordon Shaw**  
**20<sup>th</sup> July 1936 – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024**



Good afternoon to those of you here in Yorkshire and elsewhere in the UK. Good evening to those of you in the East and good morning to those of you in the West. Thanks to Rev Steve Jakeman for taking care of the technology and supporting us during the Committal Service. Welcome to this service of celebration and thanksgiving for the life of Gordon Shaw. Celebration and Thanksgiving. We want this to be a happy occasion. We are here to celebrate the life of a very clever and wise man; a very caring man (Mike and I realized last night that we could not remember him ever getting angry with us – even though we must have given him much cause); a sometimes obstinate and opinionated man; but also a quite shy and sensitive man.

He left a great legacy – even though he would be the last to acknowledge it. We have much to celebrate and much for which to be thankful.

On behalf of my own family (Janet & Jai), my brother and sisters and their families (Mike, Barbie and Elisabeth) I would like to thank you for spending this special time with us. Mum and Dad each had a sister (Anne and Joan). Even though dear Auntie Anne and Uncle David, and Auntie Joan and Uncle Alan have passed on, their families are with us today. Cousins – welcome!

**Dad's was a life well lived. He died peacefully and at peace in his 88th year.**

So what do I mean by a “life well lived”? It is very difficult to have a good life in isolation. A life well lived is a life characterized by the many relationships developed and the other lives well impacted. It is all about the people that enriched you and the people you enriched. Be they family, friends, colleagues, and congregations. So that is why it is special that you are all able to join us today.

As you will soon find out, Charlotte expresses this far better than I!

Dad would have been the first to admit that he was not perfect. But he was made immensely better because, in his teens, he met Barbara Hooton (Babs) at Loch Street Methodist Church near Wigan. They married there in 1960.

Shortly after Dad's death I commented that he had been waiting to rejoin Mum since she died in 2015. Then I realized that was nonsense. She has remained at his side every day since then. They will now simply continue their journey together.

I very glad that Mr Rajasingh and his family have been able to join us from Chennai and elsewhere. Mr Rajasingh – you were one of Dad's dearest and closest friends for

over 55 years and I know how much you both cherished that friendship. But you were not selfish with your relationship. As a result, several generations of our families came together and have remained intertwined ever since.

In fact, the theme of families, rather than individuals, coming together characterizes all of the relationships that I will mention today.

The past couple of years have been hard on those of us left behind, seeing the passing of many of what someone recently described as the “old gang”. I would like to take this opportunity to mention a few of them and recognize what they meant to us:

- Bob and Margaret Marsh – who took care of Dad at St George’s when Mum had to remain on furlough to deliver Mike.
- Howard Dalzell – Howard remains very high on my personal list of favourite people.
- Rev Manne Sanjeeva Rao, or “Sanjeevi” as we all knew him – Dad regarded Sanjeevi as the epitome of what a good pastor should be.
- Liz Hogerzeil (more of whom later) 33
- Shanti Paramanandam (Ernest – Thanks)
- Colin and Eva Nickeus (whom we only found out about when trying to contact people about Dad)

Patrick Manne (Sanjeevi’s son) commented to me last week that they must be having “one heckuva party”. He is right because (and this may surprise some of the grandkids) they knew how to party. It is probably fortuitous that Church House was not designated as a Methodist Manse!

I would like to take this opportunity to make a few comments about Dad’s work in India, especially as the Medak Diocesan Treasurer. I am very proud of what he achieved even though some now consider the context to be unfashionable. A Church is only as useful as the good work that it can do (refer to James 2). At that time, the churches in India were struggling because they could no longer rely upon the funding from their historical overseas partners. Dad persuaded the Diocese to use land it owned through the building and leasing of commercial properties, providing an improved revenue stream to support the work of the dioceses. It was also the time when KNH (from the German Churches) innovated to make investment in the wellbeing of children from impoverished families through education to be more effective. Dad was inspired, and those stars aligned to transform the Diocesan educational institutions.

The object of Dad’s work and the joy it brought him always related to his congregational communities. From Loch Street and Trinity Methodist Churches near Wigan to the very special congregation of St John the Baptist in Secunderabad, the circuit of Southeast Northumberland and finally the churches here. With his roles at the Overseas Division and British Council of Churches, the world became his congregation allowing him to pursue his passion for global development and ecumenism.



Liz Wright (later Liz Hogerzeil) used to tell the story of her arrival in India. As a young nurse, she travelled alone to Bombay by ship and then by train to Secunderabad. Upon arriving at Secunderabad Railway Station she asked how she could get to Medak. She was told that she had to “take a rickshaw to Paradise”. (In those days the Secunderabad Central Bus Station was next door to the Paradise Talkies Cinema). Dad – may you fully enjoy your rickshaw ride to Paradise! (Pictured).

### **Stephen Shaw (Son)**

#### **Tribute to The Revd Dr Gordon Shaw**

A missionary of the Methodist Mission Society (MMS), England.

Dear Friends in Medak Diocese of the Church of South India (formerly a British Wesleyan Methodist Mission field and Church) and Methodist Church in Great Britain and Ireland).

It is with a deep sense of loss and gratitude I write this tribute in the memory of the Rev. Dr. Gordon Shaw. All of us who knew him and worked with him are sad at his passing away. At the same time, we thank God for his life and witness in India and also in the United Kingdom.

He and his wife Barbara came to India as MMS missionaries and were sent to Medak in 1962. He was made the Superintendent of the Boys’ Hostel as well as Presbyter at the Cathedral. They soon learnt Telugu the local language and began to work with local presbyters under the leadership of Bishop Eber Priestly, who himself was a MMS missionary from Ireland.

Rev. Gordon Shaw and Barbara hailed from Sheffield, in Yorkshire, from where the Rev. Charles Walker Posnett came earlier to Medak. With their simplicity and friendliness and unassuming character, they soon won the hearts of people in Medak.

Soon they were sent to Secunderabad and in 1967, he was made the Diocesan Treasurer at a turning point in the life of the Diocese. The MMS gave a notice of withdrawal of their financial support from 1975. 36 Added to this, there was no bishop in the diocese after the retirement of Eber Priestly. The CSI Synod sent Bishop H.D.L. Abraham, then an assistant bishop in Bellary to Medak. There was hot and cold reception to him but through his outstanding courageous leadership he stabilized the administration. Together with Rev. Shaw, the Rev. B.G. Prasada Rao, the Rev. P.Y. Luke and others they took important decisions and requested the MMS to send their funds in advance. Under the leadership of the Treasurer Rev. Shaw they undertook construction of commercial complexes in Hyderabad to generate income for the diocese in lieu of MMS funding withdrawal. It was a giant step for the diocese. "Finding some way of ending the diocesan dependence on overseas funding and building up of service and mission activities of the church", was his greatest contribution to Medak Diocese.

Shaw also built the Church House in the diocesan office campus for housing the Treasurer as well as members of the committees whenever they come for committee meetings. It showed the sagacity of the leadership of Rev. Shaw. At the same time, he was also presbyter in charge of the church of St. John the Baptist in Secunderabad. In 1975, they returned to England.

"In 1975, he was appointed to the staff of the Methodist Church overseas Division (the former Methodist Mission Society) and later to the Conference for World Mission of the British Council of Churches, both of which appointments kept him in frequent contact with the 37 Churches of North and South India for the next 20 years." After 1995, he was made Secretary to the India Relations Committee in England, in which capacity he remained till 2005 and made a tremendous contribution in bringing the partners together in support of the united church in North and South India. His significant contribution lies in supporting theological education in India through the Senate of Serampore and Board of Theological Education in India for Doctoral, doctorate in ministry and external studies, particularly in the establishment of the Senate Centre for pastoral and theological research by extension (SEPTRE) in Kolkatha, India. The Council of the Serampore College conferred on him a D.D. in recognition of his contribution to theological education.

It was my privilege to be associated with him between 2000 and 2005 as India Liaison Secretary at the Association of Churches and Mission in Stuttgart, Germany, representing the Church of South India. He organised several partnership consultations in India, in the UK, in Germany, in Holland and in Canada. He was a meticulous writer of the minutes of the meetings. Through him and with the help of Baron Kathleen Richardson, the then President of the Methodist Church and member of the House of Lords, we had the privilege of having our evaluation of India Relations Committee meeting in the House of Lords, London.

He also served as Treasurer and Committee member for several years of the Friends of the Church in India (FCI), a charity organisation in the UK.

I was also privileged to visit him in his village in Northumberland near Newcastle. He also paid a day's visit to us to the Centre for Mission Studies, Queen's College, Birmingham as we were spending a short sabbatical in 2010.

He always kept contact over emails. We celebrated Eucharist together with the Rev. R.A. Marsh using the CSI Liturgy in East London in 2016.

He was truly a man of God and gift of Mission to India.

May his soul rest in peace!

We pray for his family for God's grace and mercy at this time of bereavement, knowing and believing that Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and life

Sincerely submitted  
Bishop Surya  
CSI Bishop Emeritus  
Hyderabad  
February 21, 2024

### **Tribute to the Revd Dr Gordon Shaw – FCI Management**

I have known Gordon since 2000, the year I came to work with the Church Mission Society as Asia Regional Manager. I have met with him regularly ever since and in two main associations. First as a fellow member of the CSI-CNI Relations Committee of which he was the convenor for many years, and secondly as fellow members of the Friends of the Church in India (FCI) where we served together on the committee of management for several years. I have been deeply impressed by Gordon's personal commitment to the churches in India and inspired by his deep ecumenical understanding and vision. This was always accompanied by a clear and incisive analysis of any situation and by words of wisdom in matters that arose. He always made me think more deeply and for this I am grateful. His many friends in India as well as in the UK and Europe will also be grateful for his life and service and feel keenly the gap left following his departure to a better place.

Adrian Watkins, FCI Chair

### **Tribute to the Revd Dr Gordon Shaw**

Gordon was a very good supporter of the life and work of Church of South India and was involved in the leadership of Friends of the Church in India, UK. Barbara and Gordon were missionaries in Andhra Pradesh in India, though I have known them only since 2003. He was a 40 passionate and committed member of FCI. He served as FCI Chairperson from 2005 to 2007 and then as Treasurer in the following years. When Gordon spoke, we were able to see his wisdom from the past and his efficient guidance for the present and future life of FCI.

I had the chance to work closely with Gordon while I was Chairperson of FCI for 6 years. I treasure his thought-provoking guidance in the Management Committee for us not to forget the areas of Ecumenism and gender equality, and his wise financial

guidance which still we remember. He was a broad-minded person in sharing FCI's vision, and he enabled us to implement it graciously. The FCI constitution and its website are the legacy of Gordon's work with FCI.

Gordon and Barbara's encouragement, friendship, and love, as we experienced them in the life of FCI, were marvellous, and we recollect that and give thanks to God. Gordon was a man of simple heart and focused mind in God's mission. I know his love and affection to all Indians, particularly Telugu people in London. Gordon introduced CSI Telugu members and encouraged us to serve and support them with our friendship. I respect Gordon for his friendship and love towards Indian people when God called him to serve as a missionary from the UK, and in his later years his committed partnership with FCI.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Revd Jessie Anand, Treasurer FCI