

History

Order of St. Luke the Physician in the UK

William Seymour, an African American, who described himself as quiet and unassuming somewhat dishevelled in appearance and blind in one eye, set up a church in 1906 at 312, Azusa Street, Los Angeles determined to bring the gospel to life. It was the familiar story: God starting something new among the poor and uneducated, on the wrong side of town. Whites and blacks treated each other as equals, which at the time in the US was radical. Eight years later white leaders set up their own Pentecostal Church under the title of 'Assemblies of God' and the blacks under the title of the 'Church of God in Christ'. By 1915 the church at Asuza Street had closed. It is now a parking lot. By 1922, William Seymour had died.

Within six months of Asuza Streets founding, 38 missionaries had spread out – first to major cities in the United States, then across the world – to destinations in Egypt, Norway and South Africa.

Reacting against the formality of organised religion, these Pentecostals could no longer be contained by the established churches. Traditional religious services stress teaching and belief *in the unseen presence* of God, Pentecostals stress having *an experience of Jesus* and the Holy Spirit.

By 1967 the Spirit had struck into the heart of every denomination: Presbyterian, Lutheran, Mennonite, Baptist, Anglican and Roman Catholic.

There have been three waves:

- ❖ The *Pentecostal Wave* started in Asuza Street in 1906.
- ❖ The *Charismatic Wave* when the traditional churches of the First World accepted the teaching
- ❖ The *Third Wave* when the Third World (Africa, India and China) accepted the teaching.

Although charismatic renewal, including healing, has been more or less accepted by the traditional churches and, to some extent, it has been 'domesticated'.

In the first three centuries after Jesus death, healing prayer was a major part of normal, ordinary life. Then during the following sixteen centuries healing progressively weakened and was pushed off to the side. Individuals, who rediscovered the healing ministry, were snuffed out by the local church structure. We see the same pattern: the Holy Spirit moves but is blocked by the institutional churches. Part of the reason is doctrinal and part is because of excesses and aberrations that give 'renewal' a bad name. Usually the institutional churches resist what seems new.

In a mere one hundred years those who have experienced the power of the Spirit have grown to such an extent that it is the second largest group of Christians in the world – the first being the Roman Catholic. It outnumbers all Protestant denominations and the Orthodox Churches counted together.

The traditional churches are struggling. For example, in Rio de Janeiro in the

early 1990s, 700 new Pentecostal churches, 240 spiritist temples and just one Catholic church were started in a three year span.

The greatest gift Jesus came to give – the Holy Spirit – was taken away as an experienced reality in our lives. Christianity has returned to its earliest traditions – the tradition of the first 300 years.



In England, a reawakening of this ministry began through a variety of leaders, who formed the Society of the Nazarene in 1914. This Society was sponsored by William Temple, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Coventry, Cuthbert Bardsley, and others.

Rev'd John Maillard formed a Healing Life Mission at the Milton Abbey Healing Home and Rev'd William Wood with the London Healing Mission. Dorothy Kerin started her healing home at Burrswood. In 1926 the Society of the Nazarene was officially approved and endorsed by the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops as the healing organisation of the Anglican Communion.

In America in 1920 Rev'd Henry Wilson established an American Branch of the Society of the Nazarene with Rev'd Dr. John Gayner Banks. Dr. Banks had gone to America from England as a layman to study for a doctorate in therapeutic psychology at the University of Missouri. Encouraged by Henry Wilson, he went on to be ordained and felt a call to spread the Good News of the divine healing ministry to the entire world.

He was convinced that Christ's power to heal to-day is just as great as it was when He walked on earth. One of Dr. Banks sayings was, "A little faith brings little results; greater faith, greater results; and marvellous faith, marvellous results." This truth he had come to accept as a result of personal experience.

The North American branch of the Society of the Nazarene, withered away for the lack of organisation and leadership after the death of Dr. Wilson in 1929. John Gayner Banks was determined to do something about it. While conducting a healing mission in California he was introduced to Miss Ethel Tulloch, who had been convenor for the Southern California Chapter of the Society of the Nazarene. They were drawn together by their shared interest in the healing ministry and were married at Calvary Church, New York City by Dr. Samuel Shoemaker, who was one of the Spiritual Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous.

On their honeymoon John and Ethel Banks visited all the healing homes in England and America and they dreamed of drawing them all together under the umbrella of a world healing fellowship.

In 1930 they shared this dream with their small prayer group at St. Luke Church, San Diego, where Dr Banks was Vicar, and it was decided to name the umbrella organisation, the Fellowship of St Luke the Physician.

"Sharing" a healing newsletter was formed and still is published in North America. In the 30's and 40's Dr Banks devoted much of his time conducting healing missions at home and abroad. He devoted himself to lecturing, teaching, and to praying for many who were ill in body and soul and drawing new members into the healing fellowship.

Chapters were formed, the discipline of a rule of life added and a member's manual published. By 1947 the Fellowship of St. Luke had matured into what we now know as the International Order of St Luke the Physician and was so incorporated in 1953 in North America.

Rev'd Dr. Banks first introduced the Order to England in 1950 and a branch of the Order was formed with Rev'd Bill Woods as Associate Warden. In 1969 when Rev'd M Wynne-Parker was Warden we broke away from America and The Order of St. Luke the Physician in the UK was formed, we were registered as a Benevolent Society by the commissioners of Friendly Societies. This has evolved into a charity with the passage of time.

Our Warden changes every five years. Past Wardens are:-

The Rev'd M Wynne-Parker	1969—1974
The Rev'd Roy Parsons	1974—1979
The Rev'd Robert Beatie	1979—1984
The Rev'd Alan Burn	1984—1989
The Rev'd Ken Hibberd	1989—1994
The Rev'd Dr. Tom Brown	1994—1997
The Rev'd Peter Hancock	1997—2002
The Rev'd Frank Cochrane	2002—2004
The Rev'd Dr. Tom Brown	2004—2008
The Rev'd Bob Ash	2008—2013
The Rev'd Chris Low	2013—2018

In 2018 the title of 'Warden' was changed to 'Director' to stay in step with the changes in North America. Our present Director is Alan Coode

The Order of St Luke is inter-denominational. We are led by a Council made up of ministers and lay people. We publish a magazine entitled "Healing Ways" four times a Year and we ask for a small annual subscription. We hold an Annual Conference with speakers from within and from outside the Order.

The order is Christ centred, Bible based, sacramentally connected and co-operates to meet human needs. We do not supplant the work of the Local Churches or Medical profession but seek to promote and support both.