



MARANATHA NEWSLETTER

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"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." (Jn.12.23)

Jesus repeatedly points us to a central principle of the Christian life: our following of Christ is to the cross, to die to all that the world offers us, to our sin, to our human desires and ambitions and even to our natural identity.

"unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed." (Jn. 12.24)

On the cross Jesus gave up His Spirit.....His breath.....His life.....

At Pentecost - the feast of the new grain - His Spirit was released and His resurrection life was birthed in all who believed and received Him.

"But if it [a grain of wheat] dies, it produces many seeds." (Jn. 12.24)

We are accustomed to pursuing this call of Christ as individuals, but what does it look like for us to enter into this death-and-life dynamic as one, as a community of God's people?

Resurrection life is no longer an individual life alone, but the fullness of the life of Christ - human lives united as a body by a spiritual bond of love under one head, Jesus Himself.

"I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (Jn. 12.32)

The way that we live glorifies and portrays the image of the God we worship.

At our last planned Maranatha Community Annual Gathering, this coming February, we will finally place the life of the Maranatha Community, as a single seed, into the ground. It is a good seed; it is the Lord's seed. It is a life laid down and it is a life offered up so that Jesus will be glorified.

"He must become greater and greater, and I [we] must become less and less."
(Jn. 3.30 NLT)

Death or Life?

Unless I die
I cannot live.
This is the truth
that defies
the logic of the world;
the truth
that liberates me
from my bondage
to sin;
the truth
that raises me
from the jaws
of death itself,
to sit,
in fullness of life,
with my risen,
ascended Lord
in the realms of heaven,
yet while still here
on earth.
And from this place
my eyes
are opened,
rid of obscuring veil,
to see
new shoots
springing up
towards the light
that gave them life;
shoots
that could not have lived,
except
that the seed
first died.

LS

Exalting JESUS...

Under the radar of the world, the Lord has been preparing His people throughout the earth for such a time as this. He has multiplied, equipped and positioned His saints and now it is time for the Body of Christ to mobilise and advance the Kingdom of God. We, who have been a part of the Maranatha Community, continue to bring a unique contribution towards the uniting and building up of the Church, as the Lord prepares His Bride for Jesus' return.

Our focus is no longer the Maranatha Community. Every member is being sent out, carrying all that we have received and learned through our shared life, to impart these gifts more widely throughout the Body of Christ.

HEALING

Where there is unity in Christ, there is healing.

Christ gives authority to His people to heal.

The Cross is the centre point of reconciliation and for the healing of all relationships.

The wounds of Christ bring healing to the deepest and most complex wounds of individuals, families, communities and even nations.

Healing is not accomplished by techniques but through an encounter with the risen Jesus, often through His people.

We are called to be agents of extending Christ's healing ministry throughout His Church.



RENEWAL

To embrace the new thing God is doing we need new vision, new hearing, a new openness of heart and mind.

In our readiness to let go of old, familiar structures and patterns, we open ourselves to God's Spirit who is renewing the face of the earth.

As we have our eyes opened to perceive newness, so we can help to open the eyes of others.

As we ourselves embrace personal renewal of life and faith, so we can bring renewal of hope for others.

We are called to be catalysts of renewal wherever we are.

UNITY

During the lifetime of the Maranatha Community we have seen a great increase in the readiness of the people of God to be one.

Now it is the time to forge a deeper oneness across traditions, across the generations and throughout the nations.

The unity which Jesus prayed for is the very same unity we see in the Godhead - the relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

As Maranatha members engage with other ministries and movements, we can be as yeast which will cause the rising of the one bread, even the bread of life.

We are called to bless, and to be a blessing to the Body of Christ.



...in the world

We are living in extraordinary times. There is turbulence and uncertainty in all spheres of life - in the natural world, in political and social structures, in personal, local, national and international relations. The desperate cries of the poor, oppressed and persecuted compete for attention with the hedonistic pursuits of the wealthy and powerful as the gulf of separation between rich and poor widens. In the western world, perhaps especially in the UK, the tightening vice of secular humanism has been a vehicle for 'the thief' who comes to steal, kill and destroy, with the particular target of our children; whilst globally the rise of Islamist fundamentalism strikes fear into the hearts of many.

CONTENDING FOR THE NATION AND THE CHILDREN

Maranatha members must continue to be catalysts for uniting Christians in prayer for the nations, and especially for the young. As the unity of the Church is more fully realised, so is its authority to challenge and defeat all powers of darkness and the prevailing spirit of the age. All that is required is that we engage with others in the Body of Christ in this battle, through united prayer and witness.

To date, our focus has been the UK. Now it is time to reach out, in love, to brothers and sisters throughout Europe, to pray as one people for God's Kingdom to be advanced once again in this continent.

"I urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" (Jude 3).



WATCH, LISTEN, PRAY, ACT

The Lord has taught us important spiritual disciplines. In these days of great deception, we are to be watchmen discerning, through God's Spirit, the true from the false. We listen for the Shepherd's voice in every situation and follow His direction. Through the same Spirit we are taught how to pray and are inspired in how we should act.

Through prayer in love, humility and mutual submission, in Christ, we have learned what it means to attain oneness of heart and mind. All of these disciplines are valuable for the whole Body of Christ.

Let us remain alert and ready as we wait, watch and listen in the days to come.

PRAYING AND SPEAKING UP FOR THE PERSECUTED



Since the Maranatha Report on the global persecution of Christians was published in 2014, members have continued to document further evidence. A supplementary report will soon be available from the office for prayer and presentation to your local MP.

We continue to affirm our unity with brothers and sisters in Christ suffering persecution as we pray for them.

The State of Israel AN APPRAISAL



ISRAEL

After several years of journeying together the Spearhead Group, which was drawn together to consider 'The State of Israel', is now preparing to publish a document under this title. Copies may be ordered in advance from the Maranatha office..

TIME

A time to be with the Father
A time in His Spirit
A time in that moment
A time in His embrace
A time to be searching
A time to be healed
A time to be among
His creation
A time to open our hearts
A time to be surrounded in
His Love,
Peace and light.

EMc

Written by a member during the time they would have usually attended the Maranatha 'First Sunday' gathering

What Remains?

Although the life of the Maranatha Community as we have known it has been laid down, this does not mean that the relationships forged over 35 years should come to an end. Quite the opposite! It is time for us to strengthen our bonds of unity with one another. Every individual member carries the gifts that God has bestowed upon this Community and our prayer is that everyone will be taken by God to new places and new relationships in which these gifts may be fully used.

We believe that the Lord has something new for the Maranatha Community, but we are not presuming what this may be. We are fully convinced that the old life must be allowed to die and we will, therefore, adopt a period of waiting and watching for the new thing. In order to be ready, in the Lord's timing, we are encouraging the continuation of the following:

THE MARANATHA OFFICE

Our three office staff will continue to work in the office at 102 Irlam Road, Flixton, where the prayer room will be relocated. The lease on the subsidiary office at 104 Irlam Road has been surrendered and the staff will now set about a re-appraisal of all our office systems.

'TASTE AND SEE' BOOKSHOP & COFFEE SHOP

This service to the local community, and to those further away who wish to use mail order, will continue to be staffed by a small team of faithful volunteers.

PRAYER CELL NETWORK

The network of Prayer Cells will continue. Prayer requests will continue to be sent out at the beginning of each week, and prayer requests can still be made by telephone or by email to prayer@maranathacommunity.org.uk.

If you do not currently belong to a Prayer Cell but would like to participate in this, please contact the Maranatha office.

RESOURCES

The full range of Maranatha literature, audio/visual recordings, books and prayers will continue to be available. Documents may be downloaded free of charge from the website, while hard copies of all resources may be ordered through the 'Taste & See' Bookshop or the office.

A new publications brochure is available on request.

LOCAL GROUPS

The Central Manchester Maranatha Gathering - the original gathering for the whole Community - has been laid down, as has the 'First Sunday' Gathering in Davyhulme, Manchester. However, the life of local gatherings continues to sustain many members in different localities around the country. We encourage all local groups to be vigilant and to seek the Lord for His renewed vision in their locality, actively looking for opportunities to further the unity of the Church in that place.

MAILING LIST

Our database of members and friends of the Community will be archived following this mailing. However, we will be starting a new mailing list, following our Annual Gathering, for those who wish to participate in the new journey.

There will be no automatic transfer of members from the old mailing list to the new. If you wish to hear further news, please contact the Maranatha office, as detailed in the accompanying letter.

GIVING

The Maranatha Community has always depended upon the giving of its members for the funding of all activities and resources. We have never received grants or funds from any other source. Our main expenses - staff and the running of the office - will continue for the present time until we hear clearly from the Lord about the new thing that He wants to do. We are, therefore, very grateful to those who are willing to continue to support the work of our office financially.

A Prayer

God has created me to do Him some definite service: He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission - I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.

He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place while not intending it - if I do but keep His commandments.

Therefore, I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him.

He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends; He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me - still He knows what He is about.

John Henry Newman

(known as the 'Maranatha Prayer' since our formation)