

THE MARANATHA COMMUNITY PRESENTS:

SPOTLIGHT

News & Views for Local Groups, by Local Groups!



Issue 17– FEB/MARCH 2010 – Editor: Matthew Doherty, Address: 1 Clover Court, Brigg, North Lincolnshire. DN20 8FE Telephone: 01652:655408 E:MAIL:dohertys@talktalk.net



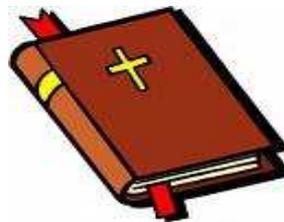
Hello! I'd like to say a very **BIG THANKYOU** for your encouraging e-mails about my first Spotlight. Very much appreciated. Last October I went to Israel with some friends and Diane Senior who attends the Brigg Maranatha group will be sharing her experience. If you have not been to Israel, I can certainly recommend going. Ed.

EASTLEIGH MARANATHA GATHERING!

In our quarterly gatherings to pray for the Nation, we have been greatly encouraged in this first quarter to hear of the initiatives through the 2011 Trust and the Evangelical Alliance called "Biblefresh.com". An opportunity to prepare in prayer this year for **2011 to be the 400th Anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible** is indeed a cultural and spiritual opportunity in the run up to the 2012 Olympics.

We are therefore praying for our culture in a fresh and dynamic way, being led by the Holy Spirit to believe He is pouring Himself out upon the culture **Acts 2:17(a) confirms that in the last days the Lord would pour out His Spirit on ALL flesh!** We are therefore anticipating that He is about to be poured out in greater measure upon the areas of influence in our culture. These high places are seen as:

- Church
- Family
- Education
- Government
- Media
- Arts
- Business



The Church is the great influencer, and can call and train a generation to climb to the "high places" - to be influencers in the next generation. We are inspired by the "**Wilberforce Connection**" and the way in which the Clapham Group achieved this in their day, some 200 years ago.

The fact that the leaders of the Maranatha Community at the recent Quinta Conference sensed that the opportunities were opening up to us has greatly encouraged us in this way of praying.

Danny Stupple – Eastleigh Regional Gathering Co-Ordinator

EASTER

by Andrea Macrow

Early in the morning on the first Easter day
Arose the Saviour from the tomb and took our sin away
Satan was defeated, Christ won the victory
Tomb and cross now empty, the powers of darkness flee
Eternal life is possible to all who will believe
Redemption and renewal, mankind can now receive

Another poem of Andrea's is appended.

We read out her seasonal poems at care homes and everybody is blessed. Ed.



“WHAT IS DESIRED IN A MAN IS LOVING KINDNESS” (Proverbs 19:22)

Muriel King, the co-ordinator of the Scunthorpe group, was very disappointed not to be able to attend Quinta and meet more Maranatha members. This meant that when Group initiatives were shared at Quinta, there was no reference to Crossline. Hopefully, this article will to some extent make up for that.

For a number of years Muriel had on her heart to promote a confidential listening service, operated by Christians, to bring comfort, encouragement, support and healing to anyone in times of loneliness, bereavement, distress, sadness or other emotional crisis. Christians in the area (from various backgrounds and including other Maranatha members) caught the vision and 1st July 2006 marked the start of **“Scunthorpe and District Crossline”**

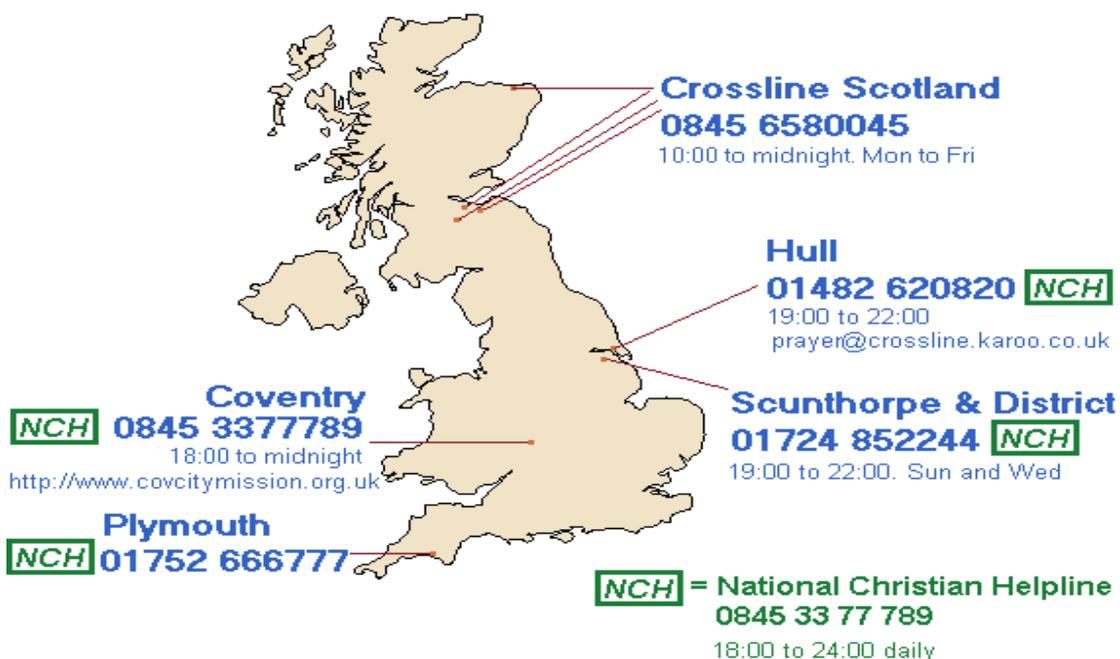
It started as a purely local service with volunteer listeners working on a rota of three hour shifts on two nights per week. It is now also a part of the **Mental Health Helplines Partnership** which operates a daily evening service linking up with similar services at Hull, Coventry, Maidstone and Plymouth.

Muriel and her team are understandably moved by the stories they hear, which she describes as “awful.” “There are so many calls from unhappy and hurting people” she says “Many relationships have been broken.”

It is not easy to keep together a team of volunteers and it is in any event important that they are not overwhelmed by the circumstances they encounter. Muriel is currently asking local churches who do not as yet support the service to do so in the future and an invitation is extended for new volunteers to come forward for training.

In the meantime, the ministry is bearing much fruit, as the listeners offer an open heart of love and compassion. Indeed, in recent times, four callers have returned to Christ!

PLEASE PRAY FOR MORE WORKERS (Matthew 9:37-38)



DOUAI ABBEY

This poem was written after a walk along the lanes around Douai Abbey, during A School for Prayer in November, 2009. It was a time of reflection and meditation and I felt that I was at one with God's creation and His love for me.
Libby Mason

**I saw the world upside down today.
The sky, the deepest blue
with soft, white clouds,
floating gently by,
was at my feet.
No sound at all, above or below
or around me could be heard
as I strolled through unknown lanes.
The trees now bare, above my head
their leaves shed long ago.
Was this sky the heaven that Jesus spoke of,
where seraphim and cherubim continually
sing their glorious song;
where wounds are healed and pain is gone
and anger, hatred and jealousy are no more?
Was this the heaven that Jesus spoke of,
where love sustains and peace and calm
surround us all?
But no,
it was merely a reflection in a pond I passed
and once more my thoughts returned to earthbound
things.
Yet, I thank God that for that moment,
that fleeting, special moment,
I felt free, forgiven, at peace with Him.**



PETER HAUGHEY



For the last 10 years, Peter Haughey has made certain that everything is in place at Quinta for the Maranatha weekend, that all runs smoothly and that it is more than a pleasant experience for all concerned. It would be easy to take this for granted but the fact is that it involves a massive amount of commitment. What a difference he makes as he attends to every last detail!

Now, however, he believes it is time to lay it down. Peter stresses, however, that he was influenced not by his health nor by the workload but by the Lord Himself. Not that he will be "putting his feet up." He will still be heavily involved with Yorkshire Regional matters, with the Wakefield Group, with the Bethany Healing Centre and with befriending at a psychiatric hospital. And he has already committed himself to the retreats at Conway (March) and Formby (July). And, as I know from my own experience, he is such a great encourager! Who knows who else he will stand beside!

I am sure that the whole Community would like to thank the Lord for Peter's ministry and his input into our lives and the lives of many others. May the Lord preserve his health and may he be richly blessed.

Thank you Peter, for the varied ways in which you have blessed so many of us.

Mike Doherty



Northern Ireland by Margaret Walker

Last year was eventful, especially for me, with celebrations for my 80th birthday in Sheffield, Birmingham (Nat Reps), Tunbridge Wells, Belfast and again in Calgary, Canada where I spent three weeks, including a visit to the Rockies!

Our Maranatha Group attended a talk on the '**Wonder of Holy Communion**' which was a conversation between the Catholics and Presbyterians. It proved to be very interesting. One man asked many questions and said he was a Christian Muslim after Jesus had appeared to him at home and said to him to follow Him. Contemplative prayer evenings have re started in Belfast and Healing prayer evenings in Dublin.

Shirley Bowers visited us from Huntingdon and gave talks in seven towns in Northern Ireland, after being inspired by God to come to offer repentance for all that Oliver Cromwell had done to Ireland in the 1600's

In October Hilary Clinton visited Stormont to open our newly refurbished City Hall. Belfast has also really changed – so much activity and hotels springing up so suddenly.

Margaret's prayer request is that we pray for the young people

IMPRESSIONS OF ISRAEL OCTOBER 2009

As the plane makes it's descent to Tel Aviv, and the coastline of Israel appears beneath us a sense of excitement begins to stir.

The land of Israel – Eretz Israel – is like no other place. The land described in **Psalm 84:54** as “**His holy land**”, the land of the patriarchs and prophets, the land where Jesus lived, walked, preached and performed miracles. The land steeped in **His-story**.

Tel Aviv airport could be in any modern city anywhere in the world. The city itself, bustling expressways, modern office blocks and malls – **all where 60 years ago there was nothing but sand dunes**.

Our first few days are spent on a kibbutz in the **Dead Sea** area. A miracle in itself, where date palm and banana plantations are grown in the desert – each tree being drip fed with water. The kibbutz a little green oasis in the searing desert.

A tour of **Masada**, a mountain top Herodian palace where the Jews made their last stand against the Roman armies, a “float” in the Dead Sea for those who wished and a visit to Qumran, where the Dead Sea scrolls were found – no wonder they were so well preserved – a dry, arid and very hot place. The highlight however was the hike into the desert at En Gedi, the place where David took refuge from King Saul - beautiful, green, full of wildlife, and the waterfalls and pools a respite from the intense heat. (**Ps 42: “As the deer pants for streams of water so my soul pants for you O God.”**)

And so on to the **Galilee**, again a kibbutz, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. What a wonderful experience to sit on the shore and watch the sun go down and to know for sure that Jesus himself had also watched the sun set over the lake. Such a peaceful place yet behind the kibbutz the Golan Heights where Israel had battled for her existence in the past. A boat ride on the Galilee, a visit to a biblical village and then “up” to Jerusalem – “aliyah” - a long journey through the Judean desert. How hard it must have been in Jesus day – on foot, carrying everything you needed for the journey. We arrived at our hotel from an air-conditioned bus, ready for a shower and a meal, but Jesus would have walked all day, for several days, in the dust and heat, but still he went to Jerusalem, not once but many times.

A day in the Old City -fascinating, bustling, noisy, smelling of spices, narrow passageways, lots of people and then to the Western Wall. The most holy place for Jews now the Temple is no more. Men on one side, women on the other. The stones, ancient, smooth, worn by years of reverent touching. Tiny prayer requests slipped into every crevice and as you look up the memory of **Psalm 84:3 “even the sparrow finds a home...near your altar”** Nearby the Golden Menorah maybe 8 feet high, ready for the new Temple which the Jews intend to build. The Temple Institute already re-creating the vessels and robes that will be needed.

A visit to the church of **St Peter in Gallicantu** – the accepted site of the house of Caiaphas. A sculpture of a cockerel reminding us of Peter's denial of Jesus and beneath the church a cistern where Jesus may have been held on that dreadful night.

At last the **Garden Tomb** – surely the most moving place for Christians in Jerusalem. Beyond – the possible site of Golgotha – a skull like hill. A quiet garden, flowers, birds and the Tomb. Outside the garden the hustle and bustle of a city bus station, but within a place of quiet contemplation, a place to remember the anguish of the crucifixion and the utter joy of the resurrection.

There are many more impressions of Israel I could describe, but it is a place you should visit for yourself, at least once. It is a land that touches all the senses and most of all it is a land that reaches the spirit.

Diane Senior

This on the door of the Garden tomb in Jerusalem, Israel.

