

THE MARANATHA COMMUNITY PRESENTS:

SPOTLIGHT

News & Views for Local Groups, by Local Groups!



Issue 25—Spring (March, April, May)

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Olympic Prayer and Praise

19th May to 27th July

By Mavis McMutrie



"God's Love to the Nation"

Did you know that the Olympic Flame will come within 10 miles of 95% of people in the UK?

Did you also know that an hour or so before the flame departs each day, a half open top bus will set out in advance, bringing prayer and praise to the nation?

A member of our Conwy group (Alison) and her husband (Arthur) will be travelling on the bus.

There are opportunities for us all to be involved – whether through prayer, the provision of a band for part of the journey, overnight hospitality for the travellers, providing a safe haven for the bus or in other ways.

More information can be obtained on the More Than Gold website.

Please visit:

<http://www.morethangold.org.uk>

and

<http://www.thejourneyfromescalls.co.uk>

Editor: Also, it would be good to learn if any member is involved with special plans for the Queen's Jubilee celebration.

Maranatha Trip to Malawi April 2012

By Heather Williams

On the evening of Sunday 15th April a group of 9 Maranatha representatives led by Linda Stalley and Dereck Chunda hope to fly from London Heathrow to Lilongwe via Nairobi and then travel on to Blantyre for our 2nd Maranatha visit to Malawi. We will be staying for 2 weeks.

Please pray for all the final preparations for the trip including finding a minibus to hire at a reasonable price while we're there, and for each person who has committed to going. We look forward to meeting up again with many brothers and sisters from a number of different churches and also meeting new people. We will be seeking to bring the Maranatha message of renewal, unity and healing.

We also want to practically bless our brothers and sisters so will be filling our suitcases with school materials, children's clothes and shoes in good condition, medicines, bible story books etc. We are hoping to take at least one laptop to leave behind as these are in great demand by pastors and church leaders so if anyone has recently upgraded their laptop and has one in good working order to spare please get in touch with the Maranatha office. Unwanted mobile phones would also be very useful to take to pass on.

Last time through the generous giving of Maranatha members we were able to take a reasonable amount of money with us. This was used to purchase essential everyday items and bibles in the local language for people living in the poorer villages. In addition after we got back we were able to send enough money to provide a shallow well for 2 of the villages who previously had no access to clean running water.

If you are able and would like to make a donation to be used to help the people we meet on this trip please send it to the Maranatha office clearly labelled 'Malawi'.

Maranatha Pilgrimage to the Republic of Ireland

By Linda Stalley

This is being planned for the end of June /beginning of July 2012. If you are interested in being part of the team please get in touch with the Maranatha office.





Maranatha in the Community Taste and See Transformed

By Mike Doherty
(Photographs by Peter Langley)



Thanks to a £1000 donation specifically for the cafe, new tables and chairs have been purchased. The setting up of the Cafe in the first place – Sheila brought the chairs for 25p each! – was a remarkable story. But it is definitely time for a freshening up.

At the same time, money was found to replace the old canopy. It all looks very inviting.

Margaret and Jill and the volunteers have done a terrific job serving the community (and as a consequence building up custom). Margaret has now, however, had to resign and has been replaced by Ruth whom we welcome wholeheartedly into the fold.

It is pleasing to report that Margaret is from time to time able to volunteer. She still buys in the stock on a Monday morning. Her reputation for getting best value goes before her.

In these challenging times, the cafe is able to make a financial contribution to other work of the Maranatha community. What a blessing this oasis is to those who visit!

Welcome!

By John and Maureen Tame, recently moved to Huddersfield from Bedford

One of the greatest gifts which the Methodist Church has brought to Christendom is its ability to extend a warm welcome to Services and other meetings.

One of the great influences upon our decision to move to Almondbury last years was the cheery welcome we received whilst house-hunting. When we presented ourselves one Sunday Morning at the Chapel I jocularly asked “*Do you take waifs and strays here?*” to which one of the lovely ladies at the door replied “*We take anybody here*”. The friendliness meant that we instantly felt at ease (and the preaching wasn’t bad either!).

A recent visit to the rather special Augustinian “*Millennium Cup*” in Malta prompts US to pay tribute to the Welcomers at Almondbury, and we thought you might be interested to read the **Maltese Welcomers Alphabet**. The Chapel in Paceville is in the heart of the night-life area of the Island, and stays open – with trained Counsellors on duty until 2 each morning, because that is where it perceives the Church is needed.

In a message on the 10th anniversary of the Chapel, the President of Malta no less wrote

“The reason behind the Chapel (is) to serve as an oasis of peace and of the transcendental in the midst of the hustle and bustle where (money) is king and the material seems oblivious to the spiritual. I write as one who has personal experience of the soothing effect of spending time at the Chapel”

He writes about

“The fire of divine love being shared with all.”

Some testimony! But it also indicates that we may never know to whom we minister.

The Alphabet, which is slightly amended, applies not just to Sundays.

(Please see the **Maltese Welcomers Alphabet** on the following page)

The Maltese Welcomers Alphabet

A “*Welcomer*” welcomes.

Behave as Jesus would have behaved to the person who is talking to you. Remember that each person who comes to the Chapel bears the image of Christ.

Come for your duty. If you have one, put on your name tag even if everybody knows who you are. Today, may be the day the newcomer appears. By the way, have you been into the Chapel to say “*hello*” to Jesus before starting your duty?

Deliver confidence and a sense of ease and sympathy to all who come. Let people tell their story, if they so wish, and don’t interrupt - would you interrupt Jesus telling his story?

Ensure that everything around you is neat and tidy, the right lights are on, and you have all the books, notices etc to hand. You may be the first impression the visitor receives.

Food and other items for the needy must be acknowledged with grace and thanks, and appropriately stored.

Given the idea that the Welcome Area is just for friends is not right. We have coffee afterwards for socialising. Too much chatter should not disrupt the peace in the chapel.

Have a look at the notices and check with the Stewards to see if any group is expected.

If someone leaves a message write all details clearly and make sure it gets to the right person.

Just next to the Welcome Area we have a selection of books and cards – tell visitors and friends about it.

Keeep clear of arguments in the Welcome Area. If you need to argue, move away so that the Chapel remains an oasis of peace.

Laments and fair criticism are accepted, but no gossiping is allowed in the Welcome Area. Above all, refrain from passing judgement on others.

Manners maketh man – more so, what maketh a Christian and a Welcomer! Have a sense of humour, and always wear a smile.

Never give a key to anyone you don’t know before you know what he or she wants the key for.

On occasion, roam around, especially if there is more than one of you on duty. Check toilets and the kitchen etc, and take any opportunity to say a little prayer.

Please always remember that what you are doing is a special grace you received from the Lord, and for which you must always be grateful.

Quote often to each other that one of the most beautiful compensations of this life is that no-one can sincerely try to help somebody without thereby helping him or herself.

Remember that the way people see you and the way you receive them reflects the way of Christ and his Church.

Smile and employ your sense of humour to radiate the joy of faith and service to the Lord.

Treat marginalised and addicted people with special care – they are the most loved by God, and they are His special people. Under no circumstances are you to send anyone away without a word of hope and love.

Unless you are caught up in an emergency, always find a substitute for duty if you cannot make it. Never leave the Chapel without a Welcomer.

Victory is in God’s hands and not ours! As His disciples, we are not called to be successful but faithful.

Wishing others well is not utopian – it is God’s command: “*Love one another as I have loved you*”.

X- excellence is the perfection that Christ asks us to reach. That is our way of mission in this world, even though we know we will be reaching it only in heaven. Our work as Welcomers is our way of perfection to heaven.

You are precious in the eyes of God. You are unique! Appreciate and acknowledge this greatness in you, as it will leave its impact on others you may meet.

Zest and enthusiasm for the work you are doing are necessary to leave the desired effects on the ambience of the Chapel.

Maranatha Vision Meeting in the North East

By Richard Morris

Saturday 24th March 2012
Willington Methodist Church
Lydia Street
Willington
Co. Durham
DL15 0AE

Registration: 10:00am Meeting starts: 10:30am

All are welcome

For more information please contact Richard Morris on

Phone: 01388 819619

E-mail: rich.ardmorris@btinternet.com

The Mighty Healer

By Robert Wilson



A mighty healer is our Lord
He died to set us free.
His pain and suffering at an end
He rose in Victory.
Our Body, Mind and Spirit
May suffer in many a way.
But God's love has the answer.
So pray and pray and pray
The Holy Spirit makes us strong,
The Saviour makes us whole
Wounds are healed, peace to our heart,
Redemption to our soul.

O fill our hearts with Jesus
With faith and hope do pray
O fill our hearts with Jesus
And let him have his way
O fill our hearts with Jesus
He's with us night and day.
O fill our hearts with Jesus
For He never goes away.



Pause for Thought

By Robert Wilson

Peace Perfect Peace

(Jesus said)

**“Peace I leave with you;
My Peace I give to you.**

I do not give to you as the world gives.”

John 14:27



Wirral Maranatha

By John Isherwood

Our first 2012 meeting on the Wirral was on

Saturday, 28th January

Venue:
St John the Baptist Church,
New Ferry,
10.30am-3.30pm.

The theme was:
Yes, there is hope!

The theme was based on **Romans 12:12** *“let hope keep you joyful, in trouble stand firm, persistent in prayer”*

An invitation was extended to churches and fellowships throughout the Wirral. The purpose was to proclaim the good news that in Christ there is hope in the face of sickness, tragedy, family breakup, unemployment and the like. The intention was to celebrate this hope – to encourage one another and experience it daily, a hope the Bible calls *“an anchor for the soul secure and firm”* (Hebrews 6:19).

“The whole of the gathering was based around this theme, with prayer for people in need and an address by a local Anglican church”

These Gatherings (often themed) are held every two months in the same church hall.

- **24th March**
- **19th May**
- **21st July**
- **22nd September**
- **17th November**

Everyone Welcome!

For more information please contact John Isherwood on:

Phone: 0151 3271851

E-mail: john@johnisherwood.orangehome.co.uk

You're Nearer God's Heart in a Garden

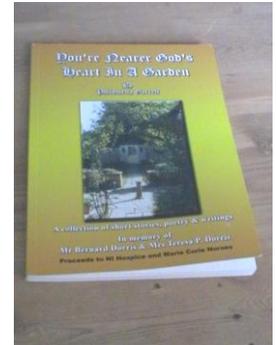
May I commend to you a book of short stories poetry and writings by **Phil (Philhamena) Garrett (Belfast group)** with contributions from her family. The light of God's love and compassion shines throughout the pages of this book of family and faith.

It was inspired by both her parents (Barney and Phyllis Dorris) and is borne out of sadness but as memories unfold, it becomes a celebration of thankfulness. It is a celebration of childhood, sisterhood, friendship, marriage, motherhood, grandchildren, family. As Michele Garrett has written

*"..... And some might think the reverence gone
As those we love one by one pass on.*

*..... At first notice I came undone.
My grand-father staring at me through my son.
But, now in joy I ascertain
Through him, my grand-father lives again.*

*.... I look to heaven's resounding grace
Renewed appreciation of life and grace."*



Phil's Dad was a dedicated gardener who delighted in all manner of flowers and birds. How amazing that on the day of his funeral, as the family stood with the priest, a flock of birds flew onto the window ledge and sat quietly until the prayers were over! It is hardly surprising that Phil receives such blessing through her own garden. As she looks towards the gazebo named "*Shekinah*" she can say.

*"I know that you're watching in Heaven
And smiling at one more mistake
The garden you tend there is awesome
For the best Dad of all pulls the rake."*

So much of the book is concerned with rebirth, including "*First Easter*" which describes the Resurrection through Mary's eyes. It is about new horizons, about hope, about our heavenly Father who watches over us.

*"Please listen my loved one whose plight I've observed.
Yes I've watched you as waves billow high
But how can I rescue when stillness you shun
Your activity obstructs my supply.*

*Remember I told my disciples to rest
And drew them apart from the throng
And there I imparted the truths of my heart
To empower them, make frailty strong.*

*It takes me my time to answer all prayer
You've sowed and you've tilled now just wait
And trust me at all times till my will is done
Your seeds child, they must germinate.*

*And then when those roots they push down through the soil.
And seedlings they strive towards my light
The hard ground it's seemed that you've struggled to pierce
Will at last yield to Heavens delight.*

*Be still and know I am God. Be still. Be still my child.
I work all things on your behalf. Be still my radiant bride."*

**If you would like the book please enquire of Phil and Tim (Tel: 028-90-615-398)
(Proceeds to Northern Ireland Hospice and Marie Curie Nurses).**

MARANATHA TEACHING WEEKENDS AND RETREATS 2012

Retreats

“Light out of Darkness”

Douai Abby, Woolhampton, Reading
16th - 20th April

“Light out of Darkness 2”

Boars Hill, Oxford
11th - 15th June

“Alone with God Together” (Silent Retreat)

Loreto Convent, Llandudno
22nd - 24th June

“Out of the Courtroom and into the Father’s House”

Flixton
29th August - 1st September

“Living in the Father’s House”

Flixton
26th - 29th September

“Light out of Darkness, Stepping Out in Faith”

Loreto Centre, Llandudno
1st - 5th October

“Light out of Darkness 2, Building with the Spirit”

Loreto Centre, Llandudno
8th - 12th September

“Waiting with God in the Desert”

Loreto Centre, Llandudno
8th - 13th October

Weekends

“Rising up as Eagles”

Loreto Convent, Llandudno
30th March - 1st April

“Healing - the way of Jesus”

Plymouth
29th June - 1st July

“Prayer – Prayer and Intimacy”

Oblate Retreat Centre, Wistaston Hall, Crewe
27th - 29th July

“Rise up men of Faith” (For men)

Beechwood Court, Conwy
14th - 16th September

“Equipping the Saints”

Bawtry Hall, Doncaster
19th - 21st October

Contacts

For more information, you can call the
Maranatha Office on

Phone: 0161 748 4858

Email: info@maranatha.community.org.uk

You can also visit their website to download a
booking form

www.maranathacommunity.org.uk

We love to receive contributions in Spotlight
on your experiences at these events.