

THE MARANATHA COMMUNITY PRESENTS:

SPOTLIGHT

News & Views for Local Groups, by Local Groups!



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The Church in action on the streets

By Mike Kendrick (Community Warden)



Are there any Street Pastors in your area? I've recently completed my training and serve as part of a team of Street Pastors in Chadderton, Oldham. This is one of 250 teams working in communities, towns and cities across the UK. **For more information please visit www.streetpastors.org.uk**

The team in Chadderton was formed in June 2010 and operates as a community team. We have 13 trained volunteers from local churches on the team and normally operate in teams of three every Friday night between 8pm and Midnight. We meet for prayer at 7.30pm and have a team of Prayer Pastors who pray for us whilst we are out. We receive a weekly briefing from the Police who provide details of '*hot spots*' they would like us to visit. We also have regular briefings from the Local Authority. We make ourselves available to care, listen and offer practical help to whoever we meet. Though our Christian faith is at the heart of what we do and why we do it, it is not at the forefront of what we say. Street Pastors are about demonstrating the love of God.

Whilst we vary the areas we visit, usually we will meet the many young people who gather in local parks, or on the canal side. Whilst they are under age they will usually have drink with them. They are very welcoming to us. Some evenings the group has consisted of around 40 teenagers. We are usually welcomed as the '*sweet pasta's*'. Some evenings we will walk some of them home. We also visit local off licenses, takeaways and pubs. We only drink non alcoholic drinks but engage in some very interesting discussion with the regulars who always welcome us and buy our drinks.

We have received considerable encouragement for the work we are doing from both the Police and the Council. The Council has provided funding and support to cover the training costs.

There are now over 5,000 Street Pastors across the UK. It would be great if you felt able to adopt a team near to you and pray for them.

THINGS AREN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE By Mike Doherty

Are you concerned about what drives teenagers into alcohol abuse, drug abuse, promiscuity and even suicide? I'm sure I don't need to repeat the dreadful statistics. The question is how do we make sense of what is happening; open doors of communication and begin to influence them for good?

I'm grateful that I was led to **Nick Pollard**; "**Teenagers; why do they do that?**" (Revised edition published in 2006 by Damaris Books). In fact, we devoted part of one Group meeting to this book.



Nick Pollard has for many years worked with teenagers in a context where he has encouraged them to reflect upon their values, beliefs and behavior patterns.

Chapter 1: we see how teenagers have, through a shift in educational philosophy, learned to criticize. On top of that, this criticism leads to cynicism because of a belief instilled by society that there are no answers to find. (Post modernism)

Chapter 2: reminds us that, whether we look at family life or beyond, previously stable structures in the lives of young people have fragmented. They are desperately looking for some kind of community to which they belong. Many take drugs to deal with their sense of boredom and to become part of a community that is experiencing something beyond the mundane material.

Chapter 3: observes that we now live in an anesthetic age and in a sanitized society. When teenagers experience emotional pain they tend to view it as something that should not be there and so must be removed by drugs or even suicide.

Chapter 4: notes that we all seem to have an inbuilt desire to worship and follow someone or something greater than ourselves. In recent years, pop stars, sportsmen and supermodels have been the object of such worship.

Chapter 5: demonstrates how naturalism and determinism have led many teenagers to assume implicitly that they are somehow at the mercy of their genes or their environment. Many have lost confidence in the concept of self control.

Chapter 6: explains how older people have become marginalized because of the way our society prizes knowledge above wisdom. We also see how they have lost confidence in the notion of authority because of our rejection of the concept of an author. In a 1997 survey, the Christian Research Association found that of 677 teenagers who attended church only 21% of them believed there was such a thing as absolute truth.

Chapter 7: draws it altogether. Not surprisingly it highlights an underlying rejection of God. We need to get alongside these youngsters, listen to them, build meaningful relationships and show them a radically different way of living to that which current wisdom or (lack of it) may advocate.

I RECOMMEND THIS BOOK

Platitudes



On the sixth day, God created the platypus. And God said

"Let's see the evolutionists try and figure this one out."

J. John and Mark Stibbe

(From "Bucket of Surprises")

Sharing the foundations – PRAPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD By Mike Doherty

At the vision meeting held in Garforth (near Leeds) on 7th May, Simon (a young man from Belgium based at the Ark) spoke to us eloquently on his calling as a Christian youth worker. This is a hard path, but as he comes to the Lord with his burdens there is a “*beautiful exchange*”.

Simon told us

“The kids need to know God is always with them. They need to know what is right and what is wrong. They need to know they have been made for a purpose which is unique to them. They need to know the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They need to know that the Church is not a bridge between them and God; through the Holy Spirit they can have direct access. As they enter into a personal relationship they too will experience a beautiful exchange”.



We prayed for the Holy Spirit to fall afresh on Simon and on the young people for whom he has this burden.

Father Bill reminded us that there is a younger generation which is “*powerless, locked in, unable to get out, begging for help*”.

Let's pray for a new sense of dedication to young people in despair, trying to find a way out of this imprisonment and for them to be given back life!

John 10:10 says “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I (Jesus) have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

The Community School Project Thank you for your prayers.



This is my appreciation to God and to Maranatha members who stand with me in prayer and for their encouragement. When I joined Maranatha, Maranatha members came and visited us and we prayed together. I'd like to thank Mama Rohna, Brother Jim, Mike, Tuula, and Brian. May the good Lord bless them abundantly.



Things started changing in my ministry, my life, and my family. We managed to construct a building. As you see it's so beautiful, the school is called **Community Hope Children's Centre**. As you can see in the pictures, this year we are joyful for that new project. Our church and community are bringing their children to our school; my wife is one of our teachers. We have about 50 children; we are telling them about the love of Christ, teaching them to pray. Some of these children we are helping because they are orphans. We have victory in His name.

I pray that Maranatha continues to fellowship. In Uganda we have a Maranatha group, we fellowship every fourth Monday morning of the month at the **Life Gospel Church**. We pray and share the Word of God. May the Good Lord bless Maranatha members all over the world.

Pastor Asher Kalema from Uganda E. Africa.

If you want to contact Pastor Asher, his e-mail address is asherkalema@yahoo.com Ed.

Northern Ireland Trip 26th Feb – 6th March By Heather Williams

Early on Saturday 26th of February Linda, Rhona, Les and myself just managed to negotiate Liverpool airport and catch our flight to Belfast for what was to be a very challenging but encouraging Maranatha visit. We were joined a little later by Father Bill who was part of the team for the whole time and Juan who flew over just for the day to participate in the Randalstown Maranatha Gathering. Apart from Linda no one else had been on a Northern Ireland trip with Maranatha before and although it is my home country it was a new experience for me to see things from a different perspective.



There was a wonderful sense of 'family' at the gathering in Randalstown but also a clear challenge to be completely surrendered to God, to have a holy boldness in sharing the good news of Jesus and to see His Kingdom come – **God is looking for a 'united Ireland' and a 'united Kingdom' – His people to be one.**

We were very aware of God's blessing on the trip even before we got there when a friend of Rhona's offered us the use of his car for the week as he was away. Eilish again provided wonderful hospitality and the use of her car when needed and Phil and Jim Garrett took care of the accommodation overflow by putting up Les!



During the week which finished with a Maranatha weekend in Newcastle (see page 5) we visited brothers and sisters in all 6 counties of the province – some long standing friends of Maranatha and some we met for the first time. In Belfast we had a first time meeting with Pastor Jack McKee of New Life City Church - a large Elim church situated right on the peace line in Belfast. We also spent some time with Father Gerry Reynolds at Clonard monastery again situated very close to the peace line. Pastor Jack has followed in Arthur Blessitt's footsteps and walked up and down the Falls (Republican) and Shankill (Loyalist) Roads carrying a large cross for 40 days. His church reaches out especially to young people on both sides affected by paramilitary activity. **Together with other churches he is planning a city wide walk in Belfast on Saturday 18th June** when 4 large crosses will be carried from North, South, East and West of the city to meet up for a rally outside the City Hall. Linda Stalley and Les Nutall are planning to be there – if you would like to go get in touch with Linda.



In true Maranatha style each day was filled with encounters with individuals and small groups. The love, concern and commitment shown to each individual or group left a lasting impression on everyone in the team and sums up the love and care given by Maranatha to people in Northern Ireland from both sides of the religious and political divide. We spent one morning in the office of a prospective Sinn Fein councillor listening to his perspective on the current situation in his part of Belfast. Other meetings included a visit to Father Kevin Mullen, a long standing friend of Maranatha, just outside Omagh, a lunchtime meeting in Eniskillen with the Fermanagh Churches Forum, a visit to a cross community prayer group in Ballycastle, meeting with a small group in Limavady and lunch in Portadown with Methodist friends. Father Kevin was the priest supporting the family of the young police man killed in a car bomb in Omagh at the end of March. He phoned Dennis during our Maranatha 1st Sunday meeting in Manchester and we were able through Linda, Father Bill and Dennis to pray with him and bless him. Love in action. There was also time for ministry and prayer with individuals and we had a good evening in Phil and Jim's home with the Maranatha 'Servers' group in Northern Ireland.

Standing alongside, listening, encouraging, loving – that's Maranatha in Northern Ireland.

Newcastle, Maranatha Weekend By Evelyn Devlin

On 4th March, 2011 I helped organize a Maranatha Weekend in Newcastle, Co Down. This was my first venture in organizing a weekend. Although I put my trust in the Lord I had a few niggling worries, the Lord had control of everything, even the music ministry. I thank and praise the Lord for Charles Parker both for his hard work and wonderful music.

I have only had positive responses from everyone who came on the weekend and for those who came for part of the weekend. One lady Bernie has shared how broken she felt before she came and how she came from the weekend feeling as if she could face anything life could throw at her. She has told her friends how wonderful the Maranatha team was and how she felt accepted from the start; the Lord truly blessed this lady.

The highlight for me was celebrating the Eucharist together with Fr. Bill, and then taking part in the Church of Ireland service. We were united as one. Although we could not receive together we worshipped together. I can honestly say there was not one person in our little gathering who was not touched by the Holy Spirit and the great outpouring of love for the Lord and for each other. I just want to thank the Lord for sending the team to Newcastle. My love and thanks go out to Linda, Heather, Fr. Bill and Charles and I'm sure I speak for everyone who attended for any part of the weekend. May God bless you all and may He continue to work in the hearts of everyone He touched. May each seed produce an abundant harvest of blessings wherever we may go.

I almost forgot to mention the wonderful staff that runs Glenada. They were kind and helpful throughout our stay. They commented that Maranatha had something special and were touched by the spirit of peace and love which we shared. I thank you Jesus for being with us and for loving us unconditionally.

Thank You and Praise You Jesus.

Damaris

For more on relating Christian faith and contemporize culture, readers may wish to look at

www.damaris.org
www.damarisbooks.com



Dernier Publishing

Why not have a look on the website at Dernier Publishing.

www.dernierpublishing.com

This was set up

“To produce quality fiction for young people with a Christian world view. The aim of these books is to encourage, thrill and inspire young people in their walk with God – and to show non-church kids what they are missing!”

This excellent website displays **“Prayer – just do it!”** booklets; inspirational posters and greeting cards, as well as giving a synopsis of each book that has been produced



**DERNIER
PUBLISHING**

SING HALLELUJAH MUSIC BOOK

One of the Maranatha groups no longer requires the Sing Hallelujah Music Books (1997).

The Maranatha office is asking if any group is interested in having them. They have available:

- 1 music book
- 11 word books

They have 220 hymns and songs for church and small group worship (Kingsway Music).

They are free and the Maranatha office will be happy to post them to you.

You can contact them on

Phone: 0161 74984858

E-mail: info@maranathacommunity.org.uk