

THE MARANATHA COMMUNITY PRESENTS:

SPOTLIGHT

News & Views for Local Groups, by Local Groups!



[Issue 24–Winter 2011/12 \(Dec, Jan, Feb\)](#)

Editor: Matthew Doherty, Address: 1 Clover Court, Brigg North Lincolnshire DN20 8FE Telephone: 01652:655408 E- MAIL: matthewdoherty@talktalk.net

National Assembly 1st October 30th Anniversary At Cheadle Hulme By Mike Doherty

MARANATHA **30 YEARS YOUNG**

Robert Wilson (Wakefield) has produced an excellent note of the daytime session. He began:

“This turned out to be an awesome day of sharing and thanksgiving for Maranatha’s 30 year servant ministry and a time of looking forward to an exciting future”

He continued:

“Everyone who attended the day, I am sure, would leave with the sense of God’s promises on their lives”

What a pity Robert was unable to attend the evening session, when the younger generation gave their testimonies. It would very much have endorsed what he was saying. Throughout the day and the evening, the depth of fellowship - manifesting in love, peace and joy – was unforgettable. Even in the small things there was so much blessing (without even mentioning the scrumptious Lancashire Hotpot!)

Matthew and I arrived on a balmy summer’s day (1st October?) to be met in the car park with a warm West Country welcome from Peter and Richard (Cheadle Hulme?). Inside we met old friends and made new ones.

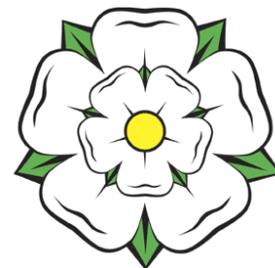
I’m so glad Ivan (Belfast) introduced me to his compatriots Phil (Philomena) and Tim. Phil has since sent me a copy of her wonderful book (“*You’re Nearer God’s Heart in the Garden*”) It’s proposed to give more details in the Spring Spotlight. I had not previously appreciated that Ivan had been gifted with the navigational skills of a racing pigeon. Apparently he uses neither Satnav nor map. Amazing!

There was John with his guide dog. Perhaps my imagination was playing tricks but it seemed to me that this gentle sensitive creature wagged his tail every time we clapped. There just wasn’t enough time to talk to everyone we knew. Hopefully there will be more opportunities at Quinta. Now there’s something to look forward to.



Please visit the following link to see a 9 minute overview video of the event

<http://maranathacommunity.wordpress.com/2011/10/21/ablaze-for-his-glory/>



There are six Maranatha groups in Yorkshire - Sheffield, Leeds, Huddersfield, Halifax, Wakefield and Harrogate. Twice a year a team of members representing these groups meet at the Presentation Sisters Convent, Huddersfield. I (a Lincolnshire member) have been invited and privileged to be a guest at a number of these meetings.

Members will be aware that that this is the Convent where Sister Elizabeth resided. She contributed greatly to the opening prayer at the meetings and their sheer warmth. Even now, when entering the building, there is a sense of something special. We feel extremely welcome. We thank God not only for Sister Elizabeth but also for Sister Kathleen (who after 37 years at the Convent has moved to Matlock) and for Sister Ita and Sister Nuala, who, with their vast experience, are in a strong position to carry on the Convent's good work in the Huddersfield area.

One of the main purposes of the meetings is to share information regarding each of the groups. We hear about special initiatives – perhaps a silent witness at an abortion clinic, or the bimonthly Quiet Days at the Convent.. We hear of words received and of networking with other Christian groups. Also, the opportunity is taken to learn of specific needs of Members which require prayer and/or action. In addition there is planning for such events as the Yorkshire Regional Annual Rally (which we all look forward to). Throughout the meeting there is an atmosphere of prayer and praise.

At the heart of the meetings is a precious and intimate fellowship. People of varying backgrounds come together and experience the blessing which is found only in Christian Unity.

Members of the Team and guests can testify to the great encouragement they have received. One member who had experienced an especially difficult year, stressed at the last meeting how important it was to know that “*we are part of something where people actually care*”. There is an understanding of member's needs which is not often replicated elsewhere.

Next year is the **10th Anniversary** of the Yorkshire Region. There is a sense that this is a time to extend links to other parts of Yorkshire, perhaps even to establish new groups. Whatever happens, all will acknowledge that Maranatha must always remain a Community of love.

Source - Song of Redemption by Lynn Austin
a novel about King Hezekiah

From Andrea Macrow

As long as you continue to seek Him, your love will
grow.

As you express your love for Him through obedience,
He will reveal more of Himself to you.

The only way to grow in faith is to put faith to the test.

You must place yourself in His hands and let Him
prove Himself faithful.

Unless you make up your mind to trust Him, You'll
never know that God is faithful.

HAVE
FAITH
in
GOD

Two Pauses For Thought

By Richard Wilson



True Love is Unconditional and Sacrificial

*So love the Lord, your God with all you heart,
All your soul and all your strength.
And love your neighbour as yourself.*

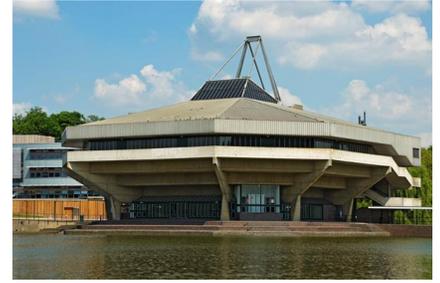
Pure Joy Comes from Jesus.

*I have told you this so that my joy may be in you,
And your joy may be complete .John 15 v 11*

Yorkshire Prayer Conference At York University 11th September 2011 By Mike Doherty

This was the second event, each arranged for the second Saturday in September.

I arrived at York University with a strong sense of expectation and was not disappointed. The praise and worship was anointed and there was a powerful sense of God's presence, not least when we were in prayer.



The attendance during the meeting grew during the morning to something in the region of 350. Approximately half were from "*white churches*" and half were from "*black churches*". I was also pleased to see other Maranatha members among the assembled. **We were all as one.**

Pastor Mwiko explained how he had been called from Zambia for such a time as this. There had been established a charity "***United Kingdom Prayer Conference***" (of which this Conference was part). The charity itself was just one of many groups seeking God for the healing of the nation. It needed to stand with the others.

The meeting was also led by Jonathan Couper, Ron Axon, and David Hathaway as well as by Herrick Daniel (Chairman of the Lancashire Prayer Conference) and Emillian Cirtina (Lancaster Baptist church).

We thanked God for the good men He had raised up over the years – missionaries, entrepreneurs, faithful farmers and reformers such as Yorkshire's own William Wilberforce and for the fact that He still wants to raise up people for His purposes.

We recognised that our eyes can easily be blinded to the full power and majesty of God and that we needed to humble ourselves, before His mighty hand. If the nation is to be released from its sickness there will need to be humility, deep repentance and the forgiveness of sin.

We needed to pray against distorted images of God. Given the rate of marriage breakdown, young people have an image of a god who has no time to listen. Didn't the riots take place, at least in part, because no one listens to them anymore? Don't we need to commit ourselves to listening?

We prayed for Yorkshire. We prayed for the nation. We prayed for those in authority in the nation. We made clear for whom we stood. We held out for God's promises in **2 Chronicles 7.14**. All His Promises are Yes and Amen.

David Hathaway talked of some of the many miracles he had encountered through his ministry. The greatest miracle in his life was not when God sent the British Prime Minister to get him released from prison, nor the healings from lung and throat cancer but when God broke the curse and power of the devil, forgave his sin, and gave him a life from which he can never die.

Many will have gone away from the meeting with a new burden for this nation and a new calling.

The Next Yorkshire Prayer Conference is currently planned for York University on 8th September 2012



My Silent Retreat By Muriel King

When I met with Matthew and offered to write about my 5 days Silent Retreat (based in the first half of *“light out of darkness”*) I thought it would be easy, short and quick, but I’m discovering that it didn’t end on the Friday afternoon when we left Llandudno. The effects of that week are like a living embryo, continuing to grow inside me, yet also reaching out to comfort and help others.



Margaret, Judy and myself, set off on Monday 3rd October for the *“Loreto Centre”* Llandudno. In one way we were excited, but we were also quite apprehensive, and a little fearful. However, we needn’t have worried. Once we had pulled into the drive of this awesome building, which is built into the rocky foundations of the Great Orme, we began to lose some of our inhibitions.

We didn’t go into silence until after the first evening meal, which was followed by an introductory meeting with our two leaders and the other participants on the retreat. At this first meeting we were asked what we expected to get out of our 5 days of silence. There were 14 of us in our group, 13 females and 1 solitary courageous man, and almost all of us had a different expectation.

Each morning we met up together for an hour or so, and were taken through different Scriptures. We then had to go away and pray about them, asking God what he wanted to say to us personally. The first day, the Holy Spirit revealed to me a deep hidden fear from my distant past when God brought me out of spiritualism. I spoke to the leaders about it, and we later prayed about the fear, which has certainly been dealt with, even though I hadn’t even been aware of its presence.

During the retreat we all experienced the power of God’s healing through silence. For some it was healing of deeply embedded and extremely painful emotions. Tears were shed, but there was joy in the morning! For others God moved and spoke into various situations, releasing tremendous peace and joy into the hearts of His people. For me, it was two terribly wrong attitudes that needed the Holy Spirits attention.

On the second day of the retreat, I had chosen not to join with another group for Mass, in the chapel. I thought, *“Why bother, when I’m not even allowed to take it”*. I had also passed a Rosary several times, draped on the wall, near the chapel, and thought, *“I don’t like that idea of chanting repetitive prayers.”*

Be very careful brothers and sisters, what you think, for the mighty Lord does know our every thought.

When I decided to look in the chapel the following day, Gods presence, and power overwhelmed me, and He told me I was standing on Holy Ground. I trembled and also repented, but Oh how Gracious is our God!!!

He just wants us to be Holy as he is Holy!

Another day we studied, *“Who is our neighbour?”* The Lord gently reminded me of how I draw my curtains half way across the bay window to shut out a nosey neighbour. He said, *“When you shut your neighbour out, you are also shutting me out.”* All my neighbours must wonder what happened now the curtains are open wide.

I can truthfully say, *“Yes, I thoroughly enjoyed the retreat, and yes, I did receive my heart’s desire to draw closer to God, and He did speak to me again, but I did not expect what actually happened”*. **God is good all the time!**

Since returning home, I have been able to recommend sitting in silence and breathing **IN** deeply, and **OUT** chanting silently **MAR-AN-ATH-A**, (which they now know means *“Come Lord Jesus”*) to three distressed callers on Crossline Listening Service. The callers began doing it on line, and went off feeling much calmer. So the Lord does His own work in strange and magnificent ways, His wonders to perform!

I can’t wait for the next silent retreat in June, 2012 to complete the second half *“Light out of Darkness”*

Covenant of Love By Andrea Macrow

God looked around at all He'd made and saw that it was good.
The starry host that wandered space, the cedar and the oak that stood,
Upon the new created earth that shone with pristine light;
Upon the man just made from dust, it was a wondrous sight.
But God looked far beyond the sight and saw creations fall;
And He could have made man not to sin and not reject His call.
The call to freely love his God and choose to follow Him.
But God gave man free will to choose His way, or walk in sin;
So God in love devised a plan that would redeem mankind,
To give to them a future and a hope in which to find
The life that they were meant to live, in joy and love and peace,
The life that had been stolen by the liar and the thief.
Satan tried to thwart God's plans and tempted Eve to sin,
But he didn't know the secret that redeeming love would win.
For God sent down at Christmas His Son in human guise,
To redeem the destiny of man and reclaim His blood bought prize.
When angels told the shepherds of the child that had been born,
They told them of a Saviour, but not about the thorn.
For Jesus came from glory to live in human form,
And that is why we celebrate His birth this Christmas morn.
So celebrate this Christmas giving glory to God's Son,
Who came to ransom sinners, overcoming death and won
The right to be the sons of God, and be reconciled once more,
If we accept the sacrifice that Jesus Christ once bore.
Jesus chose His Father's will to be the substitute,
That sinful man could then go free with no one to refute.
But you have to trust in Jesus and accept His sacrifice,
Then one day you'll go to glory, knowing Jesus paid the price.



Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a broken man. In 1861, his wife had died in a fire. In the same year, to his further distress, the American Civil War began. Two years later, his son was seriously injured in the war.

One Christmas Day, as he sat at his desk, he heard the church bells ringing. They inspired him to write the following verses.

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their Old familiar carols play
And wild and Sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, goodwill to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth", I said;
"For hate is strong
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, goodwill to men."

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep.
"God is not dead, nor doth he sleep!
The wrong shall fail,
The right prevail,
With peace on earth, goodwill to men!"



Christmas is a mystery

Christmas demands faith, because Christmas is a mystery. Our reason cannot succeed in trying to understand how God could possibly love us to such a degree. The shepherds are given a sign. They will find him in a manger. There the infant Jesus has been placed... a sign of extreme poverty and of God's supreme humility. Such a thing baffles the intellect. It teaches us that to welcome the message of Christ, the divine Redeemer, reason must be laid aside. Only humility, which melts into trust and adoration, can comprehend and welcome God's saving humility.



Pope John Paul II



A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

