

THE MARANATHA COMMUNITY PRESENTS:

SPOTLIGHT

News & Views for Local Groups, by Local Groups!



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WEEKEND AT BEECHWOOD COURT, CONWY 12TH – 14TH SEPTEMBER

PROPHETS ALIVE!

SEEING AND RESPONDING TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES



Testimony by Pam Webb

I attended a Conway weekend, “*Prophets Alive*”. This was led by Dennis Wrigley and Linda Stalley. Chris Greaves and his wife Linda helped with the smooth running and the new intern Shauna gave a youthful and delightful aspect to our gathering. Natasha, Linda and Matthew inspired us and in our ministry time Hannah was slain in the spirit. Jethro and his lovely wife encouraged us. Many others contributed to our unity and as usual we attended two church services (St. Josephs Catholic Church in Colwyn Bay and communion at St. Marys Anglican Church in Conwy) on Sunday morning.

Finding time to listen to what God is saying to us is valuable precious and essential. Being of one mind heart and spirit worshipping in unity hugely strengthens and refreshes us. Thanks to all who came and blessed us including our day visitors. “*Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.*” Hope that the people who came for their first Maranatha weekend will come again.



Mynydd y Dref (Conwy Mountain)



Beechwood Court

SOUTH MIDLAND REGION
MARANATHA GROUP;-

By Tony Cashmore

A small, but intimate group, met at 10.30 on Saturday 4th. October in our usual venue of Warmington in Oxfordshire. The title was "What are God's blessings?" The meeting started, as usual, with refreshments and then we went into a period of praise and worship, led by Michael with songs and prayers.

The theme was introduced and we talked about the importance of being open to God's blessings, accepting them in humility to be able to receive them in their fullness. We talked about looking at life's happenings as blessings even though they didn't seem like blessings at the time.

After a packed lunch and more drinks of tea or coffee, we spent the next session sharing our experiences of God's blessings. Karin said she had prayed for a young woman who had been expecting a 'Downs syndrome' child. The baby was born last week with no trace of the syndrome. I was able to recount my healing from pain which was resulting from collapsed discs and trapped nerves in my neck. I also talked about praying for the cleansing of a friend's house from satanic attack - this attack had caused foul smells in the house, electrical items to switch on and off at odd times in the night and day, and very disturbed nights for their 3 year old son. Peace - the peace of God - was the result of the prayers. Other experiences were shared and we were informed about 'Laminin trimeric proteins'. These are the connections of all atoms and cells and bind cell membranes together. Amazingly they are in the shape of a cross! The session closed with a time of open prayer which invited God's blessings into the lives of our missing members and into many aspects of our own and the world's life.

A final cup of tea/coffee and biscuits were enough to strengthen us for our homeward journeys as we left at around 4.00 p.m. after a lovely day spent in the company of beautiful people, and, of course, with our God.

OCTOBER HALF DAY GATHERING – NOTTINGHAM

By Ann Lynch

For some time our Servers' Group had been discussing the issues and questions which people keep raising and how best to respond. It was decided to set aside enough time to explore these subjects in a series of half day gatherings, which we would call 'Aspects of Ministry'.

We followed the Maranatha 'pattern' of having a prolonged time of praise and worship, prayer for our city and others in the Community and the Gathering in Sheffield. This was followed by a teaching on ministry and what we understand by that, preparing for ministry and using our gifts. We recognised the need to listen and obey the Spirit's prompting, of making sure we are well prepared and protected as we go out as little brothers and sisters of Jesus, to serve. To help us do this, each person was given a copy of the Maranatha folders 'Listening to God', 'A Spiritual Check-Up' and 'Spiritual Warfare' to work and pray through at home.

After a short break, there was a time of further input which included times of silence to listen to what God was saying to us, leading to a time of sharing and discussion. We finished with a time of ministry. Below are some of the comments from those who attended the gathering and which give a snapshot impression of our time together.

It was a very well worth while day. Joan and John

The coming together on a specific occasion for a specific intention is a blessing in itself; as a group we witnessed in silence, the key imperative for recognising the Trinity at work in us.
Kevin

Really good day, very helpful, I learnt a lot. Did you record the teaching? I'll never remember all that. There was a lot of healing. Les

Like stepping-stones; we were taken on a journey. Pat

The half day was a time to re-focus on, and be re-envisioned by Jesus' call on us to live differently, in our own 'spheres of influence'. It is always a blessing to take time out of our normal busy-ness, to share fellowship with God's people, and to have more open-ended time to worship. Personally I am always refreshed and encouraged by the true unity of Maranatha fellowship and the mutual love and acceptance that blends us all together. Lynda

What I found moving and powerful on our half day was the time of anointing those present with oil to send them out in the power of the Spirit and the way people felt empowered and encouraged.
Michael

Our next Gathering in this series as we try to follow through the call for Maranatha to equip the saints will be in April 2015.

OCTOBER GATHERING - SHEFFIELD

By Mike Doherty

WE ARE WELL ABLE TO STAND

At the Yorkshire October Gathering in Sheffield we were well blessed.

It became clear that many who attended had been through (or were still experiencing) a turbulent time. Here was a time to rest in the Lord and to hear the word or words he had for each of us.

We were strengthened by the fact that the Lord knows all about facing turbulence (**Hebrews Ch 4 vs 15**). In Him we are not afraid.

Also, we were reminded that, as with a tree which is subjected to storms, we too develop deep roots when facing trials of many kinds (**James Ch 1 vs 2 – 3**). In fact these trials can provide an assurance that God has chosen us!

We were encouraged by the doors being opened for the Community nationally and internationally. In turn, there was a clear role for Maranatha groups and individual members as we moved forward in God's purposes.

We were blessed with the ministry of Linda Stalley, of Pat and Mark Hallam and also of Pastor Grandison who brought with him a party of brothers and sisters from Jamaica via London! This was not of course a formally structured meeting and we were able to receive encouragement from others during the day as each was prompted.

Referring to the **Book of Esther** Pastor Grandison asked us to consider what time is it in this nation and what we are called upon to do at this time. Can we realistically respond to the suffering of others around us without sticking our head above the parapet? There is a Haman Spirit which has positioned itself strategically in Government, set on annihilation of God's order. As we consider documents such as Maranatha's "*Matter of Life and Death*" what will be our response? Who will stand for those who are forgotten? Are we prepared to allow our hearts to be disturbed?

Linda urged us to take seriously the need for prayer cells. In particular, we should where possible bring together people of different traditions. There is to be a new monthly prayer letter and there is also the prospect of a new quarterly prayer letter, to be shared with other networks.

On the face of things, the challenge in the nation is impossible. However, Pastor Grandison encouraged us with the words of **Ephesians Ch 3 vs 13 – 20**. In Christ we are well able. We should tell our feelings to get behind us. God has deposited in us everything He has. He has held nothing back. He has given us His Spirit, the promise of Heaven. We are able because He is able. Therefore, are we prepared to break from the norm and from tradition and be everything God wants us to be?

There was a very strong sense of unity throughout the day and the words of **Jude vs 24** were apt:-

“To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Saviour be Glory, Majesty, Power and Authority. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen

Many thanks once again to St Marks Church for their warm and generous hospitality. This was a day we could not easily forget.

VISIT TO UGANDA: 23RD OCTOBER – 5TH NOVEMBER 2014

By Shauna Crawley

I have been working as the Maranatha Youth Intern since the beginning of September 2014 and as part of my job I was given the once in a lifetime opportunity to go to Uganda with the Maranatha team. I have just returned from our trip and it was absolutely fantastic!



The team was made up of 14 Maranatha members of varied ages and backgrounds including: 2 members from Malawi, 3 members (+2 children) from Massaka and 9 members from the United Kingdom.

We spent many of our days visiting different communities, schools and organisations with the purpose of serving the people of Uganda and sharing with them the importance of love and unity – Many people spoke of how blessed they were by our visits and they thanked us for spending time with them.

We enjoyed going out and doing what some would call ‘prayer walking’ around various places in Uganda including:

- Maria’s care
- Prayer mountain
- Sarah’s plot of land near the Source of the Nile

We attended a number of multi-denominational church services each Sunday ranging from Catholic to Anglican to Deliverance to Pentecostal; where some of us were asked to share testimonies or to share the Word of God with the congregation.



We had a number of important meetings and sessions with groups of pastors and leaders that went extremely well as it was evident that our coming to Uganda was ‘breaking hard ground’ and many were open to hearing and receiving the message of unity in Christ Jesus.

One of the main things that amazed me about our visiting Uganda was the way in which the people praised and worshipped God so openly and freely; I found this liberating.

I was also happy to see that despite the lack of material things, the people we met were rich in spirit and the presence of God was so tangible in nearly all of the places we visited.

We met many inspirational young men and women who shared the same vision of being ‘one body’ in Christ. Many of the young men that we met were already in positions of leadership working with young people and the main thing that God continuously highlighted throughout our 2 week trip was that ‘He is raising up a generation of young people here in Uganda as well as in the United Kingdom in order to make ready the Bride of Christ’.



WISE MEN STILL SEEK JESUS

Poem by Andrea Macrow (Epworth)



The wise men came from a far off land
To search for a baby, regal and grand.
They followed a star in the dead of night,
A star of wonder and powerful light.
The wisdom of ages they'd studied with care,
And they knew that this star was something quite rare.
They prepared for the journey no matter how far,
For they knew in their hearts they must follow the star.
Day after day they travelled with joy
Bearing costly gifts for the infant boy.
They came to a palace of Herod the king
For they came to worship, they came to bring
Gifts to the child and to bow down in awe,
But Herod knew not of the message they bore.
He consulted the scriptures and learnt it was true,
And told the wise men all that he knew,
That Bethlehem's town was the place they should try,
But Herod had plans that were wicked and sly.
Then Herod made plans to get rid of the child,
He'd lost all his reason, his ravings were wild.
He waited in anger the wise men's return,
They failed to come back and tell what they'd learned.
When the wise men found Jesus they fell on their face,
And worshipped the child full of beauty and grace.
They gave him, their gifts, frankincense, myrrh and gold,
And returned to their country with gladness, and told
Of the child that was born in a manger of hay,
Who would one day be Saviour, the Truth and the Way
Do wise men still seek Jesus? Do they look beyond this world?
Do they think that life is over when death's banner is unfurled?
Do they seek the King of Heaven who was born to set men free?
Do they look beyond a stable to the man upon a tree?
The wise men came to worship, but they only knew in part
That the child they found in Bethlehem,
Was sent from God's own heart.
Today if you seek Jesus and trust in the Lord
One day he will present you to His Father, your reward
Will be eternal happiness in the Kingdom of His Son,
Then you will know the greatness of the victory Jesus won
Don't wait until tomorrow, for tomorrow may not come,
Today make your decision to follow God's own Son.
Yes wise men still seek Jesus, the Saviour of mankind,
In Him true salvation, and those who seek will find!
Today trust Christ as Saviour and you will know release,
And one day you'll be in heaven with Christ in perfect peace.

MARY

Poem by Betty Walters (Scunthorpe)



Mary, was a Jewish girl
Who lived in Galilee
God spoke to her and said
"Bear my only son for me"

She knew she could be stoned
As an unmarried mum,
But she said "yes" to God
Let your Holy will be done.

She was the only one who said
"Yes" to God without delay
Many in God's tribe
Had excuse not to obey.

She was engaged to Joseph
Who also was a Jew
He said he would stand by her -
He must obey God too.

PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

By Robert Wilson



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 Ch15 vs 11