



## MARANATHA COMMUNITY – OUR STORY

**1981**

A Methodist layman, Dennis Wrigley, and a Roman Catholic Priest, Monsignor Michael Buckley, met. They arranged a day for Methodists and Catholics to come together. Amazing things happened, including one man who had been blind announcing he could see.

People wanted to meet again. Others from different denominations of the Church came too – the Maranatha Community was born.

From the beginning, the Community prayed for and spoke out in support of persecuted Christians, mainly in Russia and China.

UNITY, RENEWAL, HEALING became foundational words.

The Maranatha Prayer Network was established.

**1984**

A group of Community members went, by invitation, to Northern Ireland. Strong bonds were forged, over 30 years of sustained visits, which continue to increase today.

EQUIP THE SAINTS – this prophetic command led to the creation of teaching notes, teaching days and residential weekends.

Maranatha groups sprang up in different parts of the country as people caught the vision of the unity of the Body of Christ.

Healing ministry became central to the life of the Community, with the development of LIFE PRAYER.

TAKE HOLD OF THE HANDLE OF THE SWORD OF TRUTH AND WIELD IT IN THE POWER OF MY SPIRIT – a further prophetic word which led to teaching on spiritual warfare.

**1989**

INCLINE YOUR EAR TO HEAR MY STILL SMALL VOICE AND I WILL GIVE YOU WORDS OF LIBERATION – another prophetic word, resulting in the establishment of Quiet Days and teaching events on listening to God.

**1990**

Contemplative retreats were started, which we now know as 'Light Out of Darkness' retreats. There were many testimonies of transformed lives and these continue today.

**1991**

SIMPLICITY, POVERTY, URGENCY – three further foundational words were given for the Community.

**1993**

"I HAVE MADE YOU A WATCHMAN..." (Ezekiel 33:7). God spoke a new word to the Community at a weekend for leaders. This was understood to mean that we should bring a message from God to the nation. In December 'A Call to the Nation' was presented at a small meeting in Parliament. The document was sent to MP's and leaders in the Church and business. Several Christian MP's responded.



**1994** 'A Call to the Churches' was presented to the leaders of different churches.

A Member of the House of Lords, Viscount Caldecote, asked to meet Dennis about the document 'A Call to the Nation'. He asked what is most important. The response – CHILDREN. Viscount Caldecote said "Maranatha, you must speak for the children".

The 'Taste & See' café and bookshop was opened in Flixton, Manchester supporting a new Maranatha office above the café.

Youth Maranatha – a minibus of 12 young people travelled to meet Christian communities in Holland, Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic.

**1995** 'WHAT ON EARTH ARE WE DOING TO OUR CHILDREN?' – this booklet, compiled with factual information, was presented at a consultation in the House of Lords. It became the subject of a National Consultation, also in the House of Lords, opened by the Lord Chancellor, and was also the subject of a debate in the House of Commons.

Northern Ireland presentation – people from across the country, including the North and the Republic of Ireland, gathered for a prayer walk. Starting at Westminster Cathedral, the gathering walked in unity to Westminster Chapel, followed by Methodist Central Hall, ending with silent prayer in Westminster Abbey. This was followed by a meeting in the Moses Room of the House of Lords. Attended by MPs and all the past and present Secretaries of State for Northern Ireland, speakers from all walks of life, including two former terrorists, presented the hope of peace.

**1996** The booklet 'What on Earth are We doing to our Children?' led to a National Children's Conference at Coventry Cathedral convened by Andrew Rowe MP – 'Heirs to the Millennium'.

**1997** 'UNMASKING THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE' – this prophetic word, derived from 2 Corinthians 4 led to a conference at Central Hall, Westminster.

Maranatha convened the first National Child Abuse Conference at the Oval. Over 100 delegates from different agencies and organisations, including victims of abuse came, and new networks were formed.

'Trumpet Call', Maranatha's campaigning arm, was launched.

This was followed by the launch of Factfile and a number of reports.

Parliamentary consultations were held on topics of concern such as 'cannabis', 'the sexualisation of children', 'euthanasia'.

Also during this time there were continued day gatherings, residential weekends, retreats and pilgrimages to Spello in Italy, Taize in France, Iona in Scotland and County Cork in Ireland.

**2004** THE STATE OF THE NATION – a fresh alarm call was presented in parliament and was also the subject of a national conference at Buckden Towers in Cambridge.



- 2004** CRISIS AND GLORY – a further call to the Church was published.
- 2006** Report on 'FAMILY & MARRIAGE' (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), was presented in Parliament.
- 2012** 'THE BIG QUESTION – WHAT ON EARTH ARE WE DOING TO OUR CHILDREN?' – a further factual report on the influences being exerted on children in the UK was presented in Parliament.
- 2013** SAME CLAY DIFFERENT FORM – a new prophetic word for the Community.
- 2014** God spoke about doing something new. In response the Community adopted an attitude of waiting, not planning the usual activities, but rather spending time listening.
- 'Generational Perspectives' – four young people spent three months listening to what God was saying to the Church, the Nation, the Nations and the Community. Their summary – 'Our generation needs to be equipped to use the sword'.
- God spoke to us – invest your resources in equipping the younger generations. A new post, the Maranatha Internship, was created. Maranatha launched on social media.
- Prayer and work was focused on unity across the generations.
- Maranatha convened a meeting of 22 Christian leaders, from different walks of life, in the House of Lords. Subsequently, a statement was drawn up on the nature of British values and the characteristics of our British national identity. This statement was presented at a Parliamentary consultation.
- 2015** 'A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH – THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SOUL OF OUR NATION' – the third warning call about the state of our nation, through turning away from God, was presented in Parliament.
- The first Maranatha all-ages weekend was held – 'Sharing Laughter, Sharing Life.
- 2017** The Community Leaders discerned a call from God to "Lay Down" the Maranatha Community, so many of our regular activities were stopped.
- 2018** The Community was corporately laid down at our annual gathering in Quinta Hall. Some members of Maranatha still continued to meet in local groups and Maranatha Prayer Cells continued to pray each week using the prayer requests sent to them by the office, which was been kept open.
- 2019** We continued to wait upon the Lord for His call for our future direction. The range of resources available from the 'Taste & See' bookshop was expanded.