



April 2004

Week 1. The Passion of the Christ

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Ideally it would be great if we could 'man' the display for 30 minutes or so each day with two or three Christians at the following times:

2:30pm,
5:00pm,
7:45pm,
10:30pm

commencing Friday
26th March.

Dear Friends/Co-Workers for His Kingdom,

As many of you will be aware the film "The Passion of the Christ" opens at the Odeon Cinema on Friday 26th March.

In America people have been deeply moved by this dramatic portrayal of Christ's suffering and as a result Christians have had opportunities to engage in conversations about Christ's death with friends and work colleagues, etc. In this country some of the national newspapers have already begun to report on this US box office success and the deep impact it is having on cinema goers.

Our church leadership felt that we should seek to maximize this potential opportunity and we have taken the initiative and spoken with the local Odeon's General Manager concerning the possible impact that this film may well have on cinema goers - some may well wish to talk about what they have seen. He has welcomed our offer to provide a Christian literature display in the Odeon's foyer and the opportunity to 'man' the display so that we can engage in sensitive conversation with people at the end of each showing.

The Christian Enquiry Agency have supplied cinemas throughout the UK with 'invitation postcards' to give to cinema goers along with suitable booklets of a follow-up nature which we at CaCC are purchasing to use on the display.

We do feel that God has provided this window of opportunity for the Church in Colchester and we want to invite your church to get involved in this with us. The film is likely to run for four or more weeks with four showings each day which means there are many opportunities for Christians from all our churches to be involved.

This will need to be properly coordinated. We are therefore seeking to set up a rota for the manning of the display.

Also we would appreciate your church supporting this initiative with prayer. Some may also wish to give financially towards our literature costs. As regards those involved in the manning of the display, I am sure you appreciate that it is important that only mature, sensible Christians are involved who you trust and who will be sensitive to this opportunity which has been afforded us. It is vital that we are not intrusive on the daily business of the cinema.

We do hope that you will feel able to get involved, either manning the display, in prayer or assisting financially thereby helping to make this a significant initiative and opportunity for us to work together.

If you are able to assist us in any way please contact me as soon as possible.

Yours for the Kingdom
Keith Barrett

Assistant Pastor
Colchester Area Community Church -
Tel: (01206) 369939

Week 2. Easter Celebration

With thanks to Revd. Fred Woods, Colchester Town Centre Parish who writes:

'Christmas is more popular than Easter but Christmas makes no sense without Easter. (Why celebrate the birth of a wandering preacher who lived 200 years ago and was executed at 33? We don't celebrate Jeremiah's birth or Plato's).

But equally Easter without Good Friday makes no sense. Which is why many churches try to 'enter into' the events of Holy week before celebrating the joy of the resurrection. Triumphalist Christianity which plays down the suffering sells people short.

A former Bishop of Winchester wrote:

"The Resurrection will not set us free for the future unless the cross also sets us free from the past"

Let's encourage people inside

and outside the church (suitable Easter cards?) to see the Easter weekend—which is in danger of being secularized and 'kicked into touch' into the realm of private piety—as the central Christian festival.

I personally find the following two prayers helpful at this season:

"Praise be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have won for us, for all the pains and insults you have borne for us. Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother may I see you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day.
St. Richard of Chichester

"Almighty God whose most dear son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into Glory before he was crucified, mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross may find it none other than the way of life and peace. Through Jesus Christ our Lord"
Common Worship

EASTER WITNESS

Please pray as the Church has opportunity to witness this Easter time.

The following united services have been arranged:

- **Colchester Churches Together.**
Good Friday Walk of Witness. 9th April 2004.
Beginning in St Nicholas Square 11.45am. Concluding at Eld lane approx.12.45pm.
Further details 01206 530934

- **South East Colchester Churches Together.**
An Act of Worship for Good Friday, 9th April 2004. At the Mercury Theatre.

Please pray for these events. Hot cross buns will be offered to on lookers with tracts and short presentations of the Gospel.

PRAYER BREAKFAST: Saturday 2nd April

8.30- 10 a.m. The Jesus Centre.

For more details contact
Dennis Codd: 01206 395792

Week 3. St Peter's and St Botolphs

Revd. Fred Woods also writes the following for our prayers.

'2003 was a very hard year for me personally, and also quite difficult for the Town Centre Parish with the loss of my wife Chris - and all she was doing and would have continued to do in the two churches, and the loss of Revd. Paula with her wonderful 17 year ministry at St Botolphs and also the other saints from the congregations. (I have found a renewed sense of hope every time I say the those words in the Anglican Communion Service:" with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven).

Also Pat Mossop the chaplain of Essex University, who has been such a valuable support, will be moving on in June.

So please join us in prayer giving thanks for :

- Faithful ministry in both churches, especially of Paula, Pat and our two Lay Readers Duncan and Michael.
- The completion of St Botolphs new hall and the way God is using it.
- Growing confidence in God purpose for us.

- Steady increase in numbers, especially in the 20/30's age group

And praying for:

- Growth in fellowship between our two congregations
- Out reach to the town centre and beyond
- St Peters church repair programme and finances
- The appointment of a new industrial Chaplain, and a new University Chaplain.

Week 4. Focus on Education.

A new church for a new generation - (Steph Neill)

In Matthew's gospel at the end of the parable of the lost sheep Jesus uses these words: "Your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost."

We're living in a generation where, for most children, church is not even considered as somewhere they would go on a Sunday and their parents hold the same view.

We recognised that to bring this generation of children into God's presence we would have to challenge both these views.

And so "Groundbreakers" was born. Approximately 50 children meet on a Sunday at Holy Trinity Primary School as part of the Sunday morning service of Kingsland Church Stanway to discover that God can be relevant to their lives today.

Over half these children attend without their parents with some of them arriving on a minibus sent to pick them up from where they live to overcome the obstacle of asking a parent to bring them.

They spend their morning starting with lively worship together with the adults (lots of leaping about here!). Following teaching the first highlight of their morning is the "prayer room." Here children can enjoy the peace of God, be prayed for, and many have had amazing experiences with God and most recently finding this a place where they can ask Jesus into their lives.

Children and young people with no church background are discovering that God is real and living today and is interested in them.

Following this they get to choose from a variety of activities – the boys favourite being football! To quote one ten year old "Groundbreakers is cool – you get to play football **and** go in the prayer room!"

The end of March and the beginning of April see a number of weeks of "girls" activities. Please pray for more girls to join us. God has given us a wonderful structure that is attracting boys by the dozen but girls need God too!

For some children, attending church on Sundays isn't a possibility due to family activities, divided families etc. So in March 2003 we

started a programme of JAS Clubs.

JAS Clubs run currently in two local primary schools and are a way for children to discover "Jesus At School." They are lunchtime clubs run with help from other local churches and aim to ensure that no child misses out on the opportunity to find Jesus for themselves. We're looking at possibilities for JAS Clubs in another primary school and a local secondary school. The programme could be used in any school that was happy for it to run so if people want to know more about it and can find volunteers we'd be happy to help them get it going.

God is changing lives in this generation. It's such a privilege to be a part of it. We are learning what it means to allow these children to be the church of today and having to change what we think church should look like for the sake of this generation. We believe God has great plans for these children. We believe that as these children living in the reality of God start praying for others, we are going to see miracles and healing. The challenge is – can we keep up with them!

Colchester Institute

'Wow! God blessed the outreach! Many seeds were sown. We have much to thank him for and much to achieve. Please continue to pray with us:

- Exams and course work deadlines for CU members, Phil: 6 – 7
- God's protection over the C.U group Prov. 18: 10
- The Lord to teach us, change us and develop us in His spiritual gifts as we meet together.
- Jeremiah 29:11 Please pray that God would reveal his plan for Colchester Institute to us.

- Protection (there are false religions and cults in the college).
- The student union elections are coming! Please pray for Christian leaders in places of authority.
- God is impacting the college through Christians United. Many lives were touched through the February 13th outreach. Please pray for all the people who picked up a flier, drinks mat or gospel, and for those who had interesting conversations with us.
- Please pray that as they read God's word their eyes would be opened and their hearts would

- long for more (2 Corinthians 4:4 and Psalm 63:1).
- Encounter! This is the chance for people to find out more. Please pray for God's leadership in this venture. Please also pray that people will be challenged and intrigued, and will come along to find out for themselves.
- Finally, plans for a summer outreach are in their developing stages. Please pray for God's wisdom in all our plans, particularly in regards to raising funds'.

Thank you. Anne.