



# March 2007

## Colchester Prayernet is four years old!

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### This month marks four years since the first person took their hourly prayer slot as part of Colchester Prayernet (CPn).

Last month at a prayer weekend for Europe, someone commented that four years was quite a long time for a prayer movement to survive. I found myself thinking about the Moravians! 100 years of non-stop intercession and the subsequent sending out of missionaries all over the world!" What can be achieved by a group of united people who are disciplined in prayer?

What have we achieved? Well, I do believe in targets and specific targeted prayer, but I think it would be arrogant of me to assume that I know what prayer has achieved in this place. CPn of course is only a small part of the whole picture anyway!

I am very conscious that we are building on a prayer heritage in the town. We stand on years and years of united prayer. I was encouraged to see the discovery of ruins of the ancient Friary (where hundreds of years ago people were "called to prayer in this place") running through Crouch Street to Wellesley Road. It is wonderful that we have a praying community of Benedictine Nuns here again after many years. And more recently we have seen many congregations within the Borough organising weeks of continuous united prayer. Wonderful!

As I meet with others in this country and further afield I am struck that what we have here is something special, that God's heart is towards this place, and we have seen many an-

swers to prayer over the last four years.

So what is planned for our fourth year at CPn? Last year we prayed around the historic gateways of our town with church leaders. It is hoped that this year we will strengthen our relationship with the church ministers. I believe it is a powerful thing when leaders and intercessors pray together. We want to continue to offer prayer into every sphere of the Borough and make prayer accessible to those who may not regularly attend church.

The Mobile Prayer Schools continue around Essex, with little uptake within Colchester, but increasing demand in the surrounding area.

Much of the intercession of the Watchmen Network has to do with establishing our identity as a town and releasing the redemptive gifting of Colchester. We are developing relationships with others across Europe and as we stand in the gap for our town, it is important that we pray for our nation, our continent and the nations of the world. We are linked into Nightwatch for Europe as part of this and have plans to travel to other gateway places and have others visit us too. We would also like to set up prayer partnerships with our twin towns in France, Italy and Germany.

One of my greatest passions is to be able to pray for our MPs. I personally believe there is favour upon us for governmental prayer (possibly due to our location—so near to London). I hope we will develop further our relationship to Westminster through

### Scriptures to pray from:

**1 Corinthians 2:9**

**Psalms 133:1**

**Ephesians 4:1-17**

**1 Timothy 2:1-8**

**2 Thessalonians 3:1**

## From front page...

the National Prayer Breakfast and other opportunities that have opened to us.

With much appreciation for those who have been with us from the start for faithful commitment to prayer and a big welcome to those who are new to CPn.

Please continue to share about this work with others you know. People do not have to have internet access to be part of CPn

as paper copies are sent out once a month to keep us all updated.

Thank you—Teresa Lasky  
**For more information about CPn please contact Marie at:**  
[info@colchesterprayernet.co.uk](mailto:info@colchesterprayernet.co.uk)

**To contact Teresa please email:**  
[admin@colchesterprayernet.co.uk](mailto:admin@colchesterprayernet.co.uk)

**To enquire about the Mobile prayer schools:**  
[schools@colchesterprayernet.co.uk](mailto:schools@colchesterprayernet.co.uk)

**Please visit our website:**  
[www.colchesterprayernet.co.uk](http://www.colchesterprayernet.co.uk)

## Colchester 2020

The next **Colchester 2020 Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Assembly** meeting is on Thursday 15th March. Colchester Prayernet and other Christian organisations take an active role in these assembly meetings. Please continue to pray for the work of Colchester 2020 and our part in the assembly.

Dr Elizabeth Hall is now Chair of Colchester 2020, and says "Over the past few months, there have been a number of changes within the partnership. Steve Bradshaw became vice chairman and Col. Tony Barton, Commander of Colchester Garrison and Brendan Osborne, Chief executive Colchester Primary Care Trust have left. Tony Phillips, Deputy Commander represents Colchester Garrison within the partnership now.

Colchester 2020 has agreed five 'Priority' commitments:

**Affordable housing**, led by Peter Powell,

**Business**, led by Ewan Dodds,  
**Community Stadium** led by Dave Murthwaite,

**Transport** led by Tony Phillips, and **2012 Olympics** led by Tony Rich.

During that period the remaining

commitments, Firstsite, Garrison, Health, Modern Architecture and University Research Park will become a "Watching Brief" and it will be the responsibility of the Lead Partner for those commitments to update Colchester2020 of any issues arising that the Partnership may be able to assist with.

Following guidelines from the government, Local Strategic Partnerships are required to ensure that the vision that is set out for their Community Strategy is sustainable. The consequence of this for 2020 are that from the March 2007 Assembly we will be launching a period of public consultation on the proposed strategic commitments that will inform a refreshed and sustainable Community Strategy that will lead the partnership to 2020 and beyond". Further details can be found at:  
[colchester2020@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:colchester2020@colchester.gov.uk)

Rev Terry Tennens is working for **International Justice Mission UK**. If you would like to commit to pray for Terry please contact him or CPn. IJM UK are looking for a volunteer to assist with admin at their office in Great Horksley. For more information contact: Terry Tennens 0845 0943109  
[www.ijmuk.org](http://www.ijmuk.org)

**SEEKING GOD'S BLESSING for COLCHESTER.** Ministers and Christian leaders from Colchester will gather together for lunch, fellowship and prayer on **Thursday 22nd March from 12—2:30pm.** Please continue to pray for unity within the Body of Christ in this town

**SMILE Puppet Ministry Mega Kids Club NEW VENUE**  
 Friday 2nd March 7 pm - 8 pm  
**Kingsland Church Lexden**  
 2 London Road, Lexden  
**Contact Ella Havell**  
 01206 735925 or  
[EllaHavell@aol.com](mailto:EllaHavell@aol.com)

**Prayer for MPs.** Prayer groups are now in place if you would like to pray for your local MP. We have prayer groups for Bernard Jenkin (Colchester North) and Bob Russell (Colchester Town). If you would like to be involved please contact CPn with your postal address, church affiliation and the name of your minister.

**Aglow.** Highwoods Community Centre. On **Saturday 3rd March** from 1.30-4.30pm. fee £3.50 including lunch. Speaker: Anne Cossey who has a passion for praise and worship.  
 Tel. 01206 520228 for more info

**Seeking God's Blessing for Colchester presents:**  
 Weighing the Issues - Ethical teaching in the Old & New Testaments. Everyone welcome.  
**Wednesday 7th March 2007**  
 Rev Dr Jane Tollington and  
**Wednesday 14th March 2007**  
 Rev John Proctor  
 At: Plume Avenue URC, Plume Avenue  
 For more info. tel: 01206 64154

**Prayer Breakfast**  
**Date:** Saturday 3rd March  
**Time:** 8.30 am – 10.00 am  
**At:** St Anne's, Compton Road

## Through the Gateway—Abolition of Slavery

On **25th March 2007** it is two hundred years since the government act that marked the beginning of the end of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. For many, this is the image that comes to mind when we hear about slavery. However, the reality is that over 12 million people throughout the world are living as slaves today.

Although this exploitation is often not called slavery, the conditions are the same. People are sold like objects, forced to work for little or no pay and are at the mercy of their 'employers'.

Slavery exists today despite the fact that it is banned in most of the countries where it is practised. It is also prohibited by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1956 UN Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery.

Despite these laws there remains plenty to do. For example

- An estimated 1.2 million children are trafficked each year (*UNICEF 2003*)
- Approximately 80% of those trafficked today are women and girls. (*US Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report 2005*)
- The three richest people in the world control more wealth than all 600 million people living in the world's poorest countries. (*Christian Aid*)
- 50,000 people die every day because they are poor (*Reality of Aid 2004*)

When I look at the lives of the abolitionists I find several principles that I think help us as

we respond to injustice today.

### **They believed change is possible**

The Bible tells us that nothing is impossible with God and as we carry this truth into difficult situations we will see those situations transformed.

### **They were not held back by their history**

William Wilberforce was not known for his godly lifestyle in college – he loved wild parties and getting drunk. He didn't let his past get in the way of God using him for the future.

### **They were linked with others who were passionate about God**

William Wilberforce is the name we remember, but he was assisted by other Christians - bankers, business men, former slavers and ex-slaves. Behind them was a whole army of Christians who had been through the eighteenth century's spiritual renewals.

***“Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But if God be for you, who can be against you?” John Wesley, writing to Wilberforce***

### **Their choices had a personal cost**

Reports are that the abolitionists worked hard, lost friends, and even became ill. Wilberforce first tried to pass the Abolition Bill in 1789. He tried again 11 times before it was passed. Jesus is pretty clear that following him has a cost – but choosing to do so is part of our response to all he has done for us.

### **They did not necessarily understand all the implications**

Recently I've become increasingly

aware that the choices I make are not so much about me but about how they affect others. Sometimes this is overt – for example, we know that being kind to someone shows them God's love. But other times it may seem less obvious, yet still as vital, that I choose God's way. This is not for my sake, but for others and for His glory.

***“Well, Henry, what shall we abolish next?”***

***Wilberforce to Henry Thornton the night the abolition bill was passed.***

I don't think the abolitionists would have expected us to remember them today, but the ripple effect of the choices they made, their perseverance, and most of all God's willingness to use ordinary people mean that history was changed forever.

### **For more ways to get involved**

STOP THE TRAFFIK

International Office  
1A Kennington Road  
London  
SE1 7QP  
U.K.

Email: [info@stopthetraffik.org](mailto:info@stopthetraffik.org)

Tel: 020 7 261 4650

[www.stopthetraffik.org](http://www.stopthetraffik.org)

***“I would like to give you a message. Please do your best to tell the world what is happening to us, the children, so that other children don't have to pass through this violence”.***

***A 15-year-old girl who escaped from the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda***

## Christian Community

In 2005 some of us went to Chelmsford to hear Sharon Stone share her heart for the nation, the region and Essex. Sharon has an established reputation for her prophetic insight. She prayed for Colchester specifically.

Although we prayed into things she shared extensively at that time, recently I have felt impacted again about establishment of Christian Community here in the town. We submit this to you for your prayer and reflection. (If you would like to hear all of the recording then please contact me at Colchester Prayernet.) Sharon highlighted four areas for prayer:

- Colchester's heritage
- False worship
- The establishment of Christian community
- Prayer for leadership.

She said: ***‘Colchester has earliest known Christian Community, deserving of more fruit’. Sharon spoke to dormant seeds, ‘Colchester is not hard ground, it is not uncultivated ground and seed is not going to be picked off by “birds of the air” but the seed will be allowed to germinate, to open up, to release the life of the Spirit and we call forth that***

***which has a heritage, call this forth redemptively for Colchester. We call forth not just church but Christian community, the ability for Jesus to be seen and heard in every sphere of society’.***

We give thanks for:

- The established Church as it is positioned at the centre of our communities
- All community based outreach, playgroups, social groups, etc
- Those creating fresh expressions of Christian Community and all that has emerged in Colchester over the last few years
- Those who have positioned themselves within their community, place of work, or social setting desiring to show God's love and see the advancing of His Kingdom

We repent:

- Where Jesus has been ‘hidden’ by our poor witness, lack of love for each other and our communities,
- Having a form of Godliness but denying the power there of (2 Timothy 3:5)
- Of negative confessions that Colchester is ‘hard ground’

We pray for:

- The establishment of vibrant Christian community in the Colchester area
- Freedom of expression and new shapes of church to emerge
- Jesus to be seen and heard in every sphere of society
- Fresh infilling of Jesus' presence into schools and other structures where community is established
- God's spirit to water dormant seeds within our lives and the life of our church
- Fresh belief and expectation of what God may do here
- That prayer would rise up in line with God's purposes for this town
- Jesus to build His church (Matthew 16:18)
- Restoration of all that has been stolen from us in the past
- The people of Colchester to know the love of God
- Transformation of town values, structures and government,
- God to get the Glory!

## Colchester Boiler Room Community

**Friday 2nd March – Sunday 4th March 2007**

Shockwave Prayer Room (prayer for the persecuted church) venue subject to confirmation .

**Sunday 18th March – Sunday 25th March 2007**

Stop the Traffick Prayer Room at West Mersea (potential shop venue to be confirmed)

Launch service at West Mersea Free Church, Sunday 18th March

To book a slot or for more information contact Joe Haward 01206 383067

**Saturday 24th March**

Action for Stop the Traffick in Colchester Town Centre.

For information contact Katy Smith 01206 522781

For latest news on Colchester boiler Room activities please check the web log

[www.colchesterboilerroom.blogspot.com](http://www.colchesterboilerroom.blogspot.com) or contact Richard Smith 01206 522781.

***CBRC will meet every Friday from 23rd February 2007.***

***From: 11pm-3am.***

***At: Colchester Baptist Church, Eld Lane (downstairs lounge)***

***Aim: To pray for peace on the streets. To pray and chat with people on the streets and in the prayer room.***

## University of Essex

Many thanks to those of you who prayed for the **Christianity Awareness week at the University of Essex (5th - 10th Feb)**. Many thanks to those who came to the prayer breakfast on the 3rd Feb.

### Praise God for:

- The number of St John's gospels and invitations given out on campus by the Christian students
- The students who enjoyed free coffee and free literature every morning (except Wednesday).
- The World cafes held at lunch time with a short gospel talk and for the number who came.
- The students who came to have a free meal and heard

testimonies from different Christian students on Monday

- The students who came to ask many questions during the 'Grill a Christian' in the SU bar on Tuesday
- The number of Muslims who came to the talk re the similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity on Wednesday
- The Chinese student who made a commitment to Christ.

### Pray for:

- All the students who signed up for the 'Christianity Explored' courses. Over 20 signed up to attend and at present only 5 came to the courses on

Wednesday.

- All the 'seed' sown during the week

There were discouragements.

- Few attended the 3 talks scheduled on Thursday-Saturday evening.
- Some Christians on campus did not get involved.

**Further Praise**— The new Chaplain for the Essex University has been appointed and he is Chinese in origin. Thank you for your prayers. We believe this is God's man for this time. Watch this space!! God bless.

*Joan Davies*

[www.essex.ac.uk/charity/friendsinternational](http://www.essex.ac.uk/charity/friendsinternational)

## Feedback

**"The itinerant evangelist Arthur Blessit has carried a simple 18 foot cross around the world preaching the gospel. When he recently visited Colchester he commented that he saw a change in our town since his last visit four years ago. He described what he saw as a hunger for God. Later at least ten people ran to the cross to start a new life."**

"I sensed there was great significance for Colchester as the cross was lifted in the centre of Culver Square, and people were being drawn to it. Arthur Blessit carries a message and a challenge to us all to walk into the nations of the earth. The same grace he has we all need to touch both the nations and the people in our culture."

"I was reminded recently of something I have been feeling - that we are with God in Dothan. We may feel we are in the Dothan of Joseph (Genesis 37 v. 17 - 28) To Joseph the sky and the hills around

Dothan were bare, and it seemed as if God had deserted him. But it was the same Dothan as Elisha's (2 Kings 6 v. 13 - 17) and 'the hills were full of horses and chariots of fire', for Joseph as they were for Elisha, though Joseph did not see them.

So for us - we may not see the banners, etc. as Joseph did not see the armies of God that Elisha saw. **BUT THEY ARE STILL THERE!** So let us walk by faith where we do not see and take the victory that has been given in Jesus". Ruth

### The Big Idea

Charity workers have launched a bid to get Colchester's name in the Guinness Book of World Records by raising £1 million from residents in just one week. Five Colchester charities have joined forces for the fundraising drive, called The Big Idea. They will hit the ambitious target if 100,000 donors give £10 each but will smash it if the

170,000 people in the borough pledges £10.

"As far as we know, no single community has ever achieved such a challenge before and, if we can meet our goal, Colchester could be finding itself in the record books and throwing down the gauntlet for other towns and cities to pick up" said a charity organiser.

The charities behind the bid are King Coel's Kittens and the Town Partnership Fund, plus the resource centre, Headway Essex and St Helena Hospice.

Volunteers urged everyone who can afford it to start saving just £1 a week from Sunday ready to pay-in during Big Idea Week from **April 30th to May 6th**.

More details of how to make a donation in next month's prayer guide, but it's time to start saving £1 each week from now!