



# March 2008

## Easter

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### A poem for prayer and reflection

#### Good Friday

1 Those who seek victory over enemies....look not upon the cross.  
 2 Those who seek personal glory... look not upon the death of our Lord.  
 2 Those who seek to be lifted up ... look not upon the crucified Christ.  
 3 But those who seek to see the folly of God's love... look.  
 3 those who seek God in suffering...look  
 4 those who seek what it looks like to be human and to be God...look  
 4 Here is our King. Here is God's glory. In the tortured flesh of our God-Man Jesus. This flesh on which we feast. This blood which we drink.  
 5 The broken, the poured out from which there is true wholeness, true shalom.

Hidden in the suffering, God is revealed.

*Author unknown*

#### The Big Hope

Easter is a key time in the church calendar but often means nothing more to those in our community than a break from school or work and a time to eat a lot of chocolate.

The Big HOPE is all about making Easter more accessible to those outside church and exploring both sides of the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. There is time over Easter to focus on the sorrow of Jesus' suffering on the cross, a theme that allows us to reach out to those

around us who are in pain themselves. It also provides us with a wonderful opportunity to gather the church and the community together to celebrate Jesus' resurrection and the new life we find in him. Easter gives us time to bless and serve our communities and to get across the important message of the cross in fresh ways.

For more information about Hope 08 see p. 4 or go to [www.hope08.com](http://www.hope08.com)

#### A prayer for Easter

"Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever".

Amen.

### Town Centre Act of Worship Good Friday—21st March 2008.

Everyone is welcome to this united service.

Meeting at Lion Walk at 12 noon  
Service will be led by Rev David Beales, DNA Networks

## Through the Gateway Prayer

**Coastlands and Gateways** is a national prayer initiative which CPn is linked to.

"Many thanks for your continued commitment to pray for the issues concerning our nations.

### We give thanks for a number of issues:

Isaiah 52v8 "Your watchmen shall lift up their voices, with their voices they shall sing together."

- After the 777 crash-landed at Heathrow Airport in January Pilot John Coward said "136 passengers miraculously survived with just a few minor injuries". Our God is so good!
- Our first prayer alert sent out saw an answer to prayer as the flood disaster that was predicted on the East coast was averted.
- For those terrorist plans that have already been thwarted and where damage and loss of life has been averted. Most probably many instances that we never get to hear about.
- For the immigrants that have come into our nation that have swelled church attendance and are starting to change the 'face of the church' in a positive way. This could be God's strategy to strengthen and bring reinforcements to our nation. Please pray for unity and fruitfulness in the body of Christ.

**Isaiah 21 v 6 "Go, set a watchman, Let him declare what he sees."**

Luke 8 v17 "For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light".

### Please continue to pray for

- Protection and wisdom for Gordon Brown and the security Services

- That the Lord would give extra insight, alertness, wisdom and discernment
- Any strategies or plans that are currently under way to bring destruction to our nations, to be thwarted and come to nothing.
- The Internet - For the exposure of those that are bringing corruption into the lives of those using it. Pray particularly for children and young people who are targeted by paedophiles. Pray that they would be protected and the perpetrators would be brought to justice. Pray also for a blocking of those that are using the internet for the purposes of terrorism.
- A weakening and a breaking of the links with Islamic extremism in our nation and anything that would seek to stop our freedom of speech and worship. For the breaking off of the fear of 'political correctness' and the spirit of intimidation which attempts to silence the Christian voice. That those in positions of influence would be able to speak the truth boldly and make a stand for what is right.
- For our Prime Minister and Government leaders to make the right alliances and covenants with the leaders of other nations as God would ordain. For repentance and asking God for forgiveness, where wrong alliances have been formed and for a re-aligning of covenants, agreements and relationships according to God's will and purposes.
- Truth as a spirit of deception is operating in so many ways across our nations and even within our Churches. Ask the Lord to reveal any ways in your life that this is operating.
- For a movement of holiness and righteousness to consume

God's people.  
**Stay Vigilant!"**

Val and Sue Coastlands and Gateways Prayer

### Prayer Breakfast

**Saturday 1st March 2008**

Time: 8.30 am - 10 am

Venue: Methodist Church, The Avenue, Wivenhoe

**Arthur Blessitt** will be at Charter Hall on **Sunday 2nd March** at 6.30 pm. Christians from across the borough are invited to this free event. Tickets direct from Charter Hall on the night.

### CYO Open Evening.

**Monday 3rd March** from 7:45pm at Plume Avenue URC Church, Plume Avenue. An opportunity to get an 'inside view' of the work of CYO including interviews with staff. Also includes coffee, cake and worship.

### Prayer walk organised by Sister Diana Impey. Sunday 9th March 2008.

Stopping at various locations in Colchester, and praying for groups or events associated with the place - civic life, education, police, military, business, etc. Wheel chair and baby buggies friendly.

TIME: 1.30 pm – 5.00pm  
Starting at 48 Priory Street and ending there with tea and evening prayer.

For more information please call 01206 86726 or email: [crssukfriends@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:crssukfriends@hotmail.co.uk)

## Crime and Disorder Reduction

In Colchester we have much to thank God for, living in the safest town and the fourth safest county in Britain. I went to visit the Crime and Disorder Partnership event at the Town Hall to discover how Colchester PrayerNet can work with other organisations.

The Crime and Disorder Partnership represents different agencies working together. The aims of the Partnership are

1. To reduce crime by 18.5% by March 2008.
2. To reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.
3. To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol misuse.
4. To increase voluntary and community engagement, especially amongst those at risk of social exclusion.

To do this the Partnership has done a number of things, two of

which impacted me in particular. One is that different agencies are working together, pooling their particular expertise for a common goal. I thought about how effective this is, and how we as Christians can do this with the different gifting God has given us.

The other way the Partnership impacted me was that alongside the focus on crime and disorder there was an equal emphasis on caring for the most vulnerable people in our community; victims of crime, especially domestic violence, and those addicted to drugs and/or alcohol.

What I did not expect was that prayer would be so central to many people's conversations. When I represent CPn I explain that Christians throughout the borough pray for Colchester, and I did that today. One person straight away asked for prayer for a particular relationship between her agency and a statutory body. Another representative asked if we could pray for her clients. I

saw that people are ready to receive prayer and understand that God hears and answers. There is both a tremendous need and a wonderful opportunity for us to offer God to people in the situations that he has placed us in; our work, our schools, our home communities. I feel a sense of urgency that we take these opportunities, however frail we may feel, and watch God do what only He can.

*Marie Morris*

### Colchester PrayerNet is 5 years old this month.

How grateful we are for all we have seen and all we have been involved in these last five years. What an exciting adventure it is to serve a living God, who hears and answers prayer today!

How humbled I am to serve alongside a prayerful people many who have stood in prayer for decades—thank you.

Let's continue to 'live as if it all depends on us, pray as if it all depends on God!'

### New email details!

*Thank you to everyone who contacts CPn each month. To contact **Teresa Lasky** write to 1, Lodge Court, West Bergholt, CO6 3JL or email her at:*

*admin@colchesterprayer.net.co.uk*

*or*

*teresa@colchesterprayer.net.co.uk*

*To contribute to next month's prayer guide contact **Marie Morris** at:*

*info@colchesterprayer.net.co.uk*

*or*

*marie@colchesterprayer.net.co.uk*

## Colchester Institute

The CU is planning an event called "the great debate" to be held on **Wednesday 19th March 2008 from 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm**. The idea is to present both sides of the Evolution versus Creation debate, then to allow people to ask questions to either panel with the view to encourage them to think about what they believe.

This will be the first CU organised event in a long time and we hope to invite lots of non-Christians along.

Please could you pray for all the necessary organisation that needs to go into this event, in particular the publicity. Please could you also pray that the right people would come and that it would achieve what it is setting out to do (we don't want a big punch up!). We hope this will be the first of many events with the potential of holding an outdoor event when the weather has warmed up a bit. Thanks

Natasha

## Colchester Nightstop

**Colchester Nightstop was one of four community-based projects from around the country that received a Faithworks Award on Tuesday 5th February 2008.**

More than 200 local community projects applied for the £5,000 awards, sponsored by Congregational & General Insurance, the Faithworks Membership, Kingdom Bank, Oasis UK and Spurgeons Network.

Malcolm Duncan, Leader of the Faithworks movement said: "Every day the people involved in these projects give themselves away for others. Their work is sacrificial, sustained and committed. These people are the true leaders of the Faithworks Movement. Our Awards ceremony is like a window on the massive world of Christian social action."

He went on to challenge both the Church and Government to move on with mutual respect saying: "If Government must be

careful with its language then so must the Church. If Government must be careful of its separatism then so must we. If it is important for Government not to generalise about us then we must not generalise about them. And if Government must avoid cynicism then we must surely be a people of hope."

He encouraged all those present to remember that creeds without deeds are vacuous by encouraging local churches to remember that faith does something. "Christian social activism is deeply rooted in the person and example of Jesus. Our faith in him must never be sacrificed on the altar of popularity. Christian social action recognises that lasting transformation must happen from the inside out. Local churches and government must recognise each others strengths and work together to see individuals and communities transformed."

Jeannette Hewes, of Colchester Nightstop, said, "I've spent the

last 3 years telling God 'I can't', and he says 'Yes, you can'. We have just as many teenagers who need help as those who we have had the resources to help. This Faithworks award means we can expand our work and meet the needs of even more young people."

This project, provides emergency accommodation for young people aged 16-25 who would otherwise be sleeping on the streets. Volunteer host families welcome young people into their own homes for a short stay providing time to find more permanent solutions or family mediation. This has proven effective in preventing the long-term homelessness cycle.

If you would like to know more about Nightstop and to book Jeannette Hewes to speak to your church or organisation, please contact her on:

07772 665952.

## Global Day of Prayer and Hope 08

"What would happen if in 2008 every community saw the life of Jesus displayed through the passion and actions of thousands upon thousands of Christians? Wouldn't it be amazing if everywhere people looked there were Christians getting involved with their community, finding out its needs and being ready to take action? What would happen if people were to see the church as the Bible teaches it is meant to be; reflecting the love and passion of God? If we, God's people, are united in offering ourselves to God to reach and touch

those around us, we have the potential to see him change the history of the United Kingdom." (*Hope 08 Publication*)

We are planning to run local events under the banners of Hope 08 and the Global Day of Prayer. Last year Christians in 204 nations joined in the Global Day of Prayer, which is held on Pentecost Sunday each year. In addition many churches are also running "Hope 08" events. The first town wide Hope 08 meeting on **Monday 10th March** at St Botolph's Church from 7:45 pm. The timetable is:

Focussed prayer from **1st - 10th May**.

**11th May - Global Day of Prayer.**

**12th May - 8th August - Hope 08** 90 days of prayer and blessing our communities

More information in next month's prayer guide, or contact Marie via Colchester Prayernet or James Collitt [james\\_collitt@hotmail.com](mailto:james_collitt@hotmail.com) (07977 510880)

## Colchester Garrison

Around 4,000 troops from Colchester are due to be deployed to Helmand province, Afghanistan towards the end of March. In January I met with representatives from several Colchester churches to pray with four padres for the Service community and to learn more about what life is like for service personnel when they are deployed.

Separation is the most obvious difficulty that troops face. Before they are deployed they have a huge amount of preparatory training where they are physically and mentally pushed very hard.

Helmand province is very difficult environmentally. It is hot in summer and extremely dusty. Washing facilities are primitive and it is difficult for troops to

maintain the high standard of personal hygiene necessary to avoid infection.

We thank God:

- For the padres - Christian ministers embedded in a non Christian organisation. For every conversation, relationship and meeting. For Christian books that soldiers "borrow" then lend to each other and never return!
- That attacks went down last time when prayer increased
- That the equipment supply has improved.

We pray for

- Decision making of leaders and of soldiers "on the ground" . Sometimes quick decisions are needed that have far-reaching effects
- Families - Soldiers are encouraged not to take family

photos with them and to leave wedding rings at home as this has security risk for family members left behind

- The nation itself - recent media reports indicate a greater level of instability in the country and the need for transformation.
- The establishment of a strong national church. There is no visible Afghan church and believers find it hard to meet in groups because of fear and suspicion. Operation World estimates that Christians make up 0.02% of the total population.
- Helmand province, (which is said to account for 42% of the world's opium).

*Marie Morris*

## 24-7 Prayer in Turkey

**Colchester Boiler Room Community (CBRC)** are off to Turkey to run a 24/7 prayer room.

From Friday 7th March – until Monday 17th March. The prayer Room runs Sunday 9th March – Sunday 16th March 2008.

**Please pray:** Turkey has a strong Muslim culture. Although freedom of religious practice is in the constitution, the practice of Islam is culturally enforced strongly. Turkish believers suffer persecution from their families and community. The secret police persecutes church activity.

The language is Turkish. Some English is sometimes spoken by educated young people.

### **The Mission**

We have been invited by a

church congregation to help them set up and run a 24-7 prayer room. They will also try and invite involvement from other church congregations. The prayer room will be aimed at Turkish speakers.

The theme for the prayer room has yet to be agreed. However, there are recurrent prophecies about the fire of the Holy Spirit sweeping through Turkey. It should also be a place of meeting with Jesus. We will also pray for strength and grace to endure the persecution.

Please pray for:-

- God to guide the planning and running of the prayer room by the Holy Spirit.
- The presence of the Holy

Spirit in the prayer room.

- Financial provision for all team members.
- Good preparation for the visiting team, and for the church in Turkey prior to the prayer room.
- Good communication and working together.
- Protection and perseverance for seekers and believers in the face of persecution.

To join in with the Colchester based prayer support for this mission please contact Mike Holden

[michael@colchesterboilerroom.org.uk](mailto:michael@colchesterboilerroom.org.uk)

or 01206 523923.