



# January 2009

## Happy New Year!

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We take some time to reflect on 2008 and thank God for all He has done in our town. As we look forward to a new year there are so many encouragements that we can build on.

### United Church Events

We praise God for:

- The first 24/10 prayer room in Colchester
- Hope activities, at Easter, throughout the summer, and at Christmas time
- Sharers in the Promise and Dreaming of a Holy Night events

We give thanks for every friendship and expression of loyalty and kindness, reflecting the character of our faithful God.

### United Church Pilot Projects

In 2008 we saw the Out for Good and New Neighbours' projects established here in Colchester. Both are pilot projects that provide a new start to some of the most vulnerable in our community. If they achieve their aims more communities like these will be established in the UK.

### United Church Provision for the Homeless

Korban is a well-established ministry to potentially homeless young people, that in 2008 won a national award.

The Abbeyfield Community Project continues to reach out to those living in that area.

We pray for Open Door, Beacon House, the Soup Run, YMCA and

others who faithfully serve into this area of our town.

### Hope for Colchester

The Hope initiative that started as a one-off event has developed into an effective network for over 53 congregations to partner together for our town.

### Street Pastors

Street Pastors continue to go out each Friday and Saturday night, to be good news on the streets of the town centre.

We praise God for:

- Vision to see what He is asking of us
- Courage to be obedient
- Hard work and perseverance

### Schools and Young People

We thank God for:

- The continued open door in our schools and colleges.
- Every opportunity to demonstrate His love.
- CYO, JAS Clubs, the KUBE, the Gideons, and every individual and organisation committed to knowing God and making Him known to children and young people.
- The prayer rooms in schools and the opportunity this provides for people to encounter God.

As we seek God for His vision for our town and beyond for the new year, let's continue to pray and work together.

This, then, is how you should pray:  
'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

## Fresh Opportunities, Fresh Expressions

2008 seems to have been a year of increased opportunities for the Church to serve our town. Please pray for these two new exciting opportunities.

### CYO prayer room.

"Sanctum, CYO's prayer room for schools, will be at Colchester Sixth Form College during the week **Monday 19th to Friday 23rd January**. The college have given us a prime space to use and are interested in looking at whether there's scope for some kind of permanent prayer room.

With over 2500 students and a timetable that includes some free time we're expecting this Sanctum to be the busiest yet.

Please pray for all the preparations, particularly as we adapt and develop the material for older teenagers. Pray too that the right people, in the right numbers, will visit the prayer room and especially that many will encounter God's transforming presence". For more information please contact Tim Abbott at CYO.

01206 863835

[tim@cyocolchester.org.uk](mailto:tim@cyocolchester.org.uk)

### Café Church @ Costas

"A couple of us in Colchester have started Café Church @ Costas in Culver Square. The first one was in December (from 7-8:30pm during late night shopping). If you are about you can drop by, but we are asking Christians to not occupy seats or stay too long as it is an outreach."

## Hope 08

We thank God for the united church events that have come about through the Hope08 initiative. Here is a report about Hope08 from the BBC. Please pray for Hope for Colchester and events planned for 2009.

### Prime Minister 'applauds those involved in Hope08'

On Monday 15th December, local Hope08 volunteers joined board members at 10 Downing Street. Gordon Brown and national church leaders honoured Hope08 and all the projects that have happened across the UK.

Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP, Prime Minister said that "People of faith have been at the heart of just about every social movement that has transformed society in this country, from the abolition of slavery through to Make Poverty History. I applaud all those involved in Hope08".

The Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP, the Vice President for Faith in the Labour Party, said that 'there is no doubt that Hope08 has succeeded in offering hope to

people'.

He went on to say that this hope was 'not the wishy washy maybe everything will get better kind of hope but the roll up your sleeves and actually do something about it kind of hope'.

Steve Clifford, Hope08 chairman, describes the event as 'absolutely fantastic – I had no idea that Hope08 would have such a high profile as it did'.

All the Hope08 community activists who were invited to the reception are part of Hope08 projects that are carrying on into 2009. During the reception they were given the opportunity to meet their local MP and share their plans for next year.

Caroline Williams from St. Albans says 'there's an awful lot going on into 2009, people can really see Christians in their community'. Caroline has put in many hours of kindness through social action projects – one of which offers free water to people outside the local nightclub.

### Please pray for:

#### The Economy

Please pray for all those affected by changes in the economy, including those made redundant, struggling with debt or running businesses. Please pray for the Church's response, for compassion and courage as we seek new ways to be true to Jesus, kind to others, and take the gospel to the nations.

**Marriages** Pray for marriages that are under pressure. Please pray that God would strengthen the family unit.

**Collective** who have worked as part of CYO. They have taken part in one last concert before disbanding in the new year. We thank God for all they have invested into the schools of this town and region. We pray God's blessings to each of them as they seek Him for their future.

## Feedback and Town News

### Mental illness

We pray for those living with mental illness and for the Church's response.

- For those who are isolated socially
- For government policies that foster health and the development of gifting
- For correct prescribing of medication
- For the Church to respond with love and courage
- That mentally ill people would be treated with dignity, especially by health professionals
- For Chaplains and others with the opportunity to befriend

### Journey into Wholeness

Give thanks:

- For enquiries from various churches which have asked JIW to be involved with some of their outreach activities.
- That Beverley's autobiography *Maze of Deception* has been reviewed by *Evangelicals Now*.
- For the continued support of the Boiler Room Community and Colchester PrayerNet.

Please pray

- For the Committee and the JIW advisers Professor John Drane, Sister Canon Penny Horseman, the Revd Peter Adams and Deacon Jane Mason.
- That our website will repay the hard work of Chris Locke in having many 'hits'.
- For wisdom for all those involved in organising the National Conference next Spring (24th to 26th April 2009)
- For continued opportunities to share the vision of JIW both at a local level and nationally [www.journeyintowholeness.net](http://www.journeyintowholeness.net)

### Hope in Colchester for the homeless

In winter the Colchester Night Shelter is in most demand, and is often full up, and having to turn people away.

So, in previous years local churches have offered their volunteers and to enable buildings to be opened to provide warm overnight accommodation for homeless people.

This is happening again this year, thank God. However, there is still need for volunteers to staff the Bunting Rooms between 28th January - 4th February, also 25th February - 5th March. So, Hope in Colchester is aiming to help.

The volunteers need to be at the venue from 9pm - 7.30am, and can sleep. There is a minimum requirement of 2 volunteers every night. And a maximum of 6 homeless people accommodated.

Can you, or people in your church congregation, be available for one of these nights? Please contact Richard Smith, 01206 522781, if you'd like to help."

[richard@colchesterboilerroom.org.uk](mailto:richard@colchesterboilerroom.org.uk)  
*Richard Smith*

### Out for Good

Keep praying! Lots of positive things are happening with the lads and we have been blessed in many ways, but the funding is an issue that needs to be resolved. I think we need to pray in a self sustaining project that involves the lads working and not relying on benefits etc.

We have the seed of an idea "Out For Good - Works", which is a job agency working with private and statutory sector organisations that are willing to give the lads a job of

some description.

Also in the pipeline is a therapeutic community, working a small holding in the local area... plus running a workshop and recreational activities. Discussions are taking place at the moment with a land owner and another Christian organisation willing to back Out For Good.

*Pete Hope*

Email: [Hopeboy291@aol.com](mailto:Hopeboy291@aol.com)  
(For more details see December prayer guide)

### Friends International

Many thanks for praying for the Friends International (F.I.) parties. They went really well!

Praise God that:

- The turkey dinners were enjoyed by all who came.
- The true meaning of Christmas was clearly presented in an atmosphere of love and fun and happiness.
- There are enough hosts for giving some students a Christmas dinner this year.

The Christmas Carol Celebration went well with about 250 folk attending.

Pray for:

- The outing to Mill Race nursery at Fordham on January 6th that there will be enough helpers.
- For good health for the team members of FI.

All the precious seed of the Word of God sown in many hearts over this Christmas time that there will be a harvest.

HAPPY New Year! Joan D

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

### The week of prayer for Christian Unity is 18th - 25th January.

The pain of division was palpable. But amidst his overwhelming grief over the plight of his nation, the prophet Ezekiel received a vision of a future where God's people were united once more. The promise of God is that of "one nation in the land, on the mountain of Israel".

The Churches in Korea have found that this passage in Ezekiel resonates with their own sense of sadness over the division of their own country since the Korean War and have brought some of the insights they have gained to the worship for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

We too may feel the pain of a divided church. The "Charta Oecumenica" (Guidelines for the Growing Co-operation among the Churches in Europe) states "Fundamental differences in faith

are still barriers to visible unity. There are different views of the church and its oneness, of the sacraments and ministries. We must not be satisfied with this situation. Jesus Christ revealed to us on the cross his love and the mystery of reconciliation; as his followers, we intend to do our utmost to overcome the problems and obstacles that still divide the churches."

A crucial part of this task is for us – people of different churches and traditions – to come together to pray for this unity, in faithfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ who prayed that his disciples might be one.

I therefore commend to you the worship and resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2009 and trust that they may help to resource your praying and working together for the full visible unity of the Church.

Revd Bob Fyffe  
www.ctbi.org.uk

We are united in your Cross.  
In you, O Christ, is love and your love has set us free.  
In Gethsemane, at the foot of the Cross,  
at the empty tomb and on the road,  
help us to recognize you.  
So may we find  
water for the thirsty,  
food for the hungry,  
shelter for the stranger,  
home for the exile,  
healing for the sick,  
freedom for the slave,  
love for the unloved.  
*Prayer for Week of Christian Unity*

### Thank you to those who contribute to the prayer guide each month.

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or

marie@colchesterprayernet.co.uk

The contributors' views are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the editors.

The CPn website is currently receiving a face lift and we hope to launch it early in the new year.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

### Prayer Breakfast

Date: Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> January

Stanway Evangelical Church,  
Chapel Road, Stanway

Time: 8.30 am - 10 am

## Passage to Freedom

Psalm Drummers are a group of 30 or so musicians that meet up regularly in Colchester, expressing worship through drumming. They often lead worship at churches around the town.

They have asked us to pray for this event.

**Passage to Freedom** is a free event, to be held at the River of Life Christian Centre to mark the launch of the book called "Forgiving Ferns".

It is a compelling true story of one man's passage to freedom, from innocence to abuse, rape crime, hate, unexpected inter-

vention and a miracle.

The event will be held at

The River of Life Christian Centre,  
2 Carr Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk  
IP11 2FS

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2009 7.15pm  
for 7.30pm

Live on stage!

Teri Bryant and the Rhythms of Fire featuring Psalm Drummers

The event is supporting Inspire Counselling & Training, Agape Alive India and The Living Room.

www.fernsemeraldpublications.org