

ChristChurch Wrexham



July 2019

Relay



Welcome to the July edition of the
ChristChurch Relay magazine

Key Dates

7th Early
Celebration,
Discovery Church,
The Meeting place,
Walk this Way,
#Sundaze

14th Leaders
Meeting
Prayer Meeting

18th Leaders'
Huddle and
Meeting.

21st Congregational
Meeting

Scripture Focus for July

Isaiah 61:1-7

61 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

⁴ They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

⁵ Strangers will shepherd your flocks; foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.

⁶ And you will be called priests of the Lord, you will be named ministers of our God.

You will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast.

⁷ Instead of your shame you will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace you will rejoice in your inheritance. And so you will inherit a double portion in your land, and everlasting joy will be yours.

The Power of 'Intercessory' Prayer.

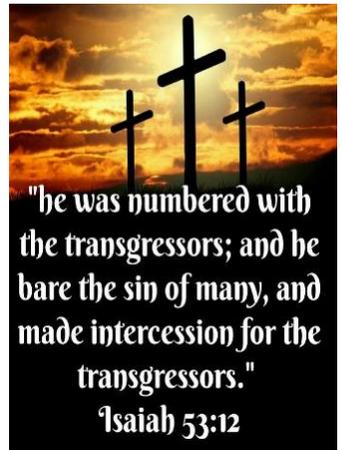
Prayer is an essential mandate we are given by God. God's encouragement for us to be a praying people saturates the scriptures. One of the ways we are urged to pray is through intercession. **Intercession means to interview or intervene on behalf of another. To act on behalf of or to entreat on behalf of someone else.** Through intercession we stand in the gap for other people and indeed the world itself. Jesus stood in the gap for us and we are called to stand in the gap for others. Intercession makes a way by bridging the gap or divide.

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. In every place of worship, I want men to pray with holy hands lifted up to God, free from anger and controversy.

1 Timothy 2:1, 8 (NLT)



Ezekiel 22:30 - I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and **stand in the gap before Me** on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.



The greatest intercession in all eternity took place at Calvary, on that cursed tree, when Jesus, our champion, made intercession for our pardon. Jesus took up the Armour of God and endured the cross so that we could go free. *Cristus Victor* - Christ the Victor. He interceded for us and now we are tasked with the duty to intercede for the world - all men everywhere. As the Moravians used to say. We pray and serve so that the Lamb might receive the reward of his sufferings (intercessions). They prayed for 100 years without ceasing in an incredible commitment to intercede for world evangelisation.

FOR THROUGH TO

Jesus prays for us, the Holy Spirit prays through us and we are to pray to the Father on behalf of all men. **What a beautiful flow of intercession - for, through & to.** To accomplish the mission given to us by Christ we have to pray. We have to be a praying people - praying with power for all people. For prayer carries the power to change the world and intercessory prayer is a means by which we act on behalf of, and impact, the world.

**WHEREFORE HE IS ABLE
ALSO TO SAVE THEM
TO THE UTTERMOST
THAT COME UNTO
GOD BY HIM,
SEEING HE EVER
LIVETH TO MAKE
INTERCESSION FOR THEM**

HEBREWS 7:25 KJV



Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought,

Romans 8:26

**but the Spirit himself
intercedes for us**

with groanings too deep for words.

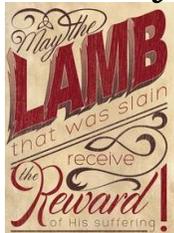
We need to learn to recognise the inner urging and prayerful groans of the Spirit. The Spirit of Jesus living in us knows how to pray when we are at a loss.

He is there to help and guide us. Therefore, sometimes the most effective prayers are the Spirit led groans (or utterings) from deep within us.

Prayer does not always need to be in words!!! The beauty of this is that the Spirit always prays in line with, and in full accordance, with the will, word and ways of God. Increasingly we need to learn to recognise and trust the Spirit in prayer and intercession. To be truly effective as watchmen (intercessors) for the world we need to learn how to look within to follow the Spirit's lead.

Love and prayers,
Blessings,

GARETH



"Prayer of intercession is unceasing prayer, undiscouraged prayer, undefeated prayer and unending prayer. It is prayer that is dynamic in its working and which produces tremendous and powerful results."

Lord, for the sake of the Lamb and the world, let us increasingly be a praying, interceding people and church. Amen.

First Baptism in new Wrexham Berwyn Prison.

On Pentecost Sunday June 9th Gareth and I had the privilege of performing the first Baptism in the Berwyn Chapel. James the Baptist Chaplain led the service attended by about 60 inmates and staff.



Gareth gave his first sermon at the prison with a SHORT word about Pentecost as in Acts. This was followed by the actual Baptism in the new portable baptistry pool. Chaplain James had fixed a wooden cross to the front of the baptistry and it looked good. We prayed for the candidate Daniel after the submersion and he was stumbling around in the pool under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we had to support him to stop him from falling back under the water.

After drying off we invited the congregation to come forward for prayer for a infilling of the Holy Spirit. There was a very good response and the Holy Spirit moved in power. The congregation responded very well throughout the service and many asked the chaplains about water baptisms and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Alan Knight

What happens when we Worship? By Kev Hill

1. We fill our lives with the Word Colossians 3 v16: "Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts."

Paul is telling us there's 2 ways for the richness of God's word to fill us - one is teaching, and the other is worshipping.

2. We build each other up Ephesians 5 v18-19: "Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts."

'Among yourselves' or 'to one another'. 100 voices singing to God is 100 confessions of faith; 100 declarations of how good God is; 100 praises; 100 encouragements.

3. It aligns us with God

Worshipping is an activity that focuses us on God; sets all distractions aside, and aligns our heart, soul and mind to Him.

4. It opens the door for God to show up Acts 16 v16-34: "One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved." This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And instantly it left her. Her masters' hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. "The whole city is in an uproar because of these Jews!" they shouted to the city officials. "They are teaching customs that are illegal for us Romans to practice." A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off! The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. But Paul shouted to him, "Stop! Don't kill yourself! We are all here!" The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household. Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God."

I wonder what Paul and Silas were singing? Maybe Psalm 119 which talks about giving thanks at midnight. But more importantly, I wonder why they were singing? Were they so encouraged and thankful about what God was doing that, despite the day they'd had, it spilled out into song? Maybe. Or were they singing in order to build each other up and to align themselves to God?

Whatever the reason, their captive audience of fellow inmates listened in until suddenly an earthquake hit. Their chains fell off, and the prison doors flung wide. God had showed up.

So powerfully was God at work that none of the prisoners took the chance to escape. A miracle not lost on the jailor, who on realising this, put his sword away and fell instead at Paul and Silas's feet and asked them how he could be saved. That night, he and his entire household believed in God and were baptised.

Worship opens the door for God to show up.

StepUP testimony from Adam

We've been meeting weekly as StepUP for a little while now, and I realised very quickly that the value of StepUP for me is in meeting with men and women of God in very different stages of their walk with Jesus. It's a super place for learning from one another. It's been great to get to understand the different perspectives on scripture that everybody has and to hear the testimonies that people in the group bring of what God is doing in each of their lives. I think the two things I've been the most mindful of over StepUP are:

1: **We cannot be ashamed to be a fool for Jesus.** I see Christians, myself included, worrying often about stuff that doesn't matter. I could cheekily throw in some social issues here but I won't. We get so bogged down in the western church with things that purely serve as distraction. I think we often fear damage to our social standing or influence far too much, when the reality is that we have an audience of One, the Lord Jesus Christ. If your co-workers think your weird for following Jesus - Good! Christians are supposed to be weird. (1 Peter 2:9 KJV - But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **a peculiar people**; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light) We have one mission to make disciples of all nations. We aren't going to accomplish that if we are worried if people like us all the time.

2: **The Cost of Discipleship.** Discipleship takes effort and often we just assume that it happens in our churches. Discipleship is only really possible when you are in a Christian community; people you can look up to, people you can come alongside and people who can learn from you. We know from the bible that we as brothers and sisters in Christ are called to correct one another and speak into each other's lives. This takes place very easily for some, but for the vulnerable amongst us, *it's really not*, it takes a lot of our personal time that we don't want to give up, to truly invest in one another's lives. We all know hearing "Oh I can't because I'm busy with X". Is that what a kingdom culture is supposed to look like? But a culture in which that is possible won't happen in ChristChurch unless we have a strong foundation for why we are there in the first place. The cost of discipleship is made easier with a strong foundation. Our foundation is the gospel of Jesus Christ. As Paul laid out in Romans 8:28-30. When we move away from the Gospel we move away from our foundation for growth and our foundation for discipleship.

So that was my testimony of StepUP so far. Hopefully it will encourage us all to think about discipleship more.

The Great Escape – Criccieth

Jean - The ladies managed to escape to Criccieth again this year for a few nights break by the sea. Dorothy did a fantastic job organising it, especially the food. It was lovely to spend time with people relaxing chatting, eating and playing games



The weather was much better than forecast and a few of us walked the coastal path to Porthmadog. Others enjoyed the seaside Cadwaladers and the shops. Angela swam every day which was totally impressive. Looking forward to next year already - by Jean

Angela - The trip to Criccieth was once again a great blessing to me. It was great to enjoy God's creation, as well as as fellowship with a wonderful group of ladies. There was lots of lovely food available, and I'm quite proud that I managed to (mostly!) resist the naughtier stuff and stick to my diet!

I am personally a huge fan of nature in all its forms and of the sea in particular. I enjoyed swimming in the sea, protected by the wetsuit that I got at a charity shop last year. It was particularly lovely to visit the beach at Nefyn, as I have lots of good memories of attending beach mission there - both as a child and later as a team member. I spent quite a bit of time just floating on my back, staring at the clouds & communing with God.

Another fun sea-related activity was doing Pilates on the pier at Criccieth. I probably looked a bit odd to the few other people that were around, but I didn't care! Afterwards, I walked to the end of the pier and sang to God and the sea. The song "Oceans" by Hillsong seemed particularly appropriate! I got rather wet as the waves were splashing over the pier, but once again I didn't care!

All in all, the Great Escape was a hugely positive for me, although I did struggle to adjust back to normal life when I returned home. It gave me an opportunity to draw closer to God and form a deeper connection with the other ladies. I'm very glad I went

Dorothy – On the weekend of the 13th to 16th June I was part of a group of 15 ladies taking the annual Great Escape to Criccieth! We stay in the Neptune Hotel which is owned by Criccieth family Church and is used for self-catering youth groups, families and the beach mission team in August. As a group we have been every year since 2001 (except 2014 when I didn't organise it)

The Neptune is right on the sea front and, if you are lucky enough to be on the front of the hotel, you can go to sleep to the sound of the waves!! Once there, you can do exactly what you like – sit on the beach, go for a walk, eat Cadwalladers ice cream, etc.!! The sea can be a very calming place to sit and meditate, pray and wonder at God's creation. We cater for ourselves and everyone mucks in and helps! We ate very well and enjoy a great time of fun and fellowship.

In the evenings some played board games, out came the knitting and sewing, reading and chatting, all very relaxing.

We used to go Friday to Sunday but some of us went on Thursday this year, to get more time. The idea has even been mooted that we go on Wednesday next year – we will soon be staying a week – same as the men's walking holiday!

All in all, it's a great time to relax, catch up with friends and enjoy the wonder of creation!

Here's to 2020.

JOURNEY OF HOPE A peace & reconciliation pilgrimage.

I have been blessed to be part of a fully funded pilgrimage run by *Reconcilers Together* which has focussed on peace & reconciliation. The journey has been undertaken with 20 others from a variety of different Christian backgrounds, with the majority being Anglican. We have visited a number of different reconciliation hubs/centres for 5 different 2-day residential over the last 6 months. We meet again this November in Glasgow when we will be running a workshop at a peace conference. <https://www.reconcilerstogether.co.uk/>
<https://www.reconcilerstogether.co.uk/leadership-training>

Coventry

Jan

This first module focussed on the grand theme of reconciliation & our role as reconcilers being those who have received the ministry of reconciliation. The highlight was Coventry Cathedral at night by candlelight.



Blackley

(Huddersfield)

Feb

A new centre working out of a Baptist Church. Here we centred in on conflict & some of the differing tools that can be used to address & work through it. Great veggie curry.

Corrymeela

(Northern Ireland)

Mar

Stunning scenery & rugged landscape helped as we explored the massive theme of marginalisation. We also experienced the awesome power of story & storytelling. 'Storm Gareth' was raging which made for a wild & windswept walk along the stunning coastline. The beach full of foaming sea was a thrill to behold.

Rose Castle

(Carlisle)

Apr

A glorious venue to study & experience the theme of radical hospitality. Hosting oneself & soul care rang a bell. Great food, drink & entertainment from very generous & gracious hosts.



Action at Home

May

Supporting a man released from HMP Berwyn prison & planning & arranging a September prison conference focussing on 'Supporting Ex-Offenders' dominated my agenda.

St Ethelburga's

(Central London)

June

A chance to celebrate one another's reconciling achievements. It was amazing to see the change the pilgrimage had brought to each person & the significant changes that each pilgrim had been the reconciling catalyst for. Reconcilers' in a church that was collateral damage to an IRA bomb – what an irony!! Another fab curry though I am now fully decided that I am not a city type or dweller!! Praying in a camel skin Yurt was pretty cool though.

Quite a pilgrim,

Love & prayers,
Blessings



Gareth



	7 th	14 th	21 st	28 th
		Communion	Offering	Communion
Setting Up	Gareth	Andrew	Richard	Rob
IT	Rob	Dan	Rob	Dan
PA				
Music Group	Joe	Adam	Lesley, Genni	TBC
Celebration Leader	Gareth	Rob	Sue	Gareth and Jean
Speaker	Gareth	Gareth	Sue	
Prayer Team	Ffion, Frank	Lucy, Marilyn	Liz, Val	Paul, Gill
Tea	Gerry, Natasha, Myra	Andrew, Liz, Joe	Elaine, Paul, Gill	Marilyn, John, Ffion
Mega Quest	No Junior Church	Genni, Sarah	TBC	All Age
EAT		Sally	TBC	

If you have any queries please call
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