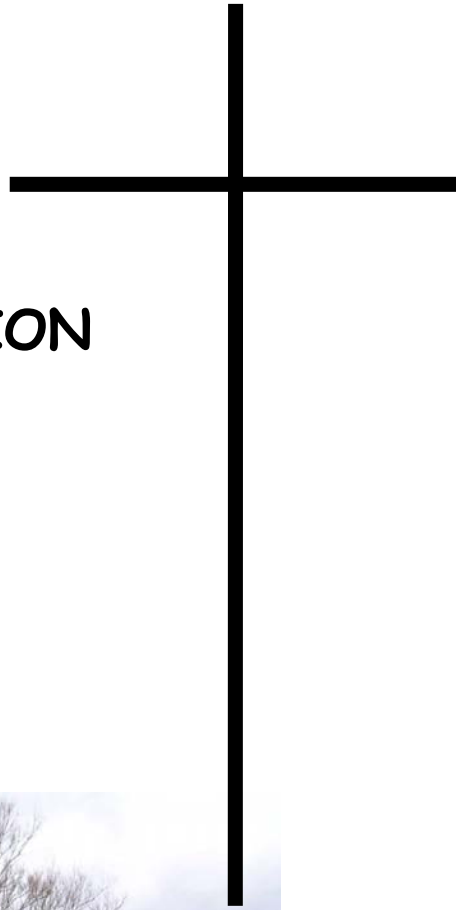


**REFLECTIONS  
ON  
COMMUNITY  
TRANSFORMATION**



**Chris Simons**  
*December 2007*

## REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Biblical Reflection on Community Transformation	5
<b>VISITS TO UK TOWNS AND CITIES, 2006</b>	
Luton	7
Liverpool	10
Manchester	13
Stoke-on-Trent	16
Ipswich - including Town Pastors Scheme <i>plus</i>	20
Street Pastors Weston-super-Mare, First Impressions by Jenny Simons	24
Summary of Key Learning Points from Towns and Cities visited	25
<b>CONFERENCES AND PRAYER EVENTS ATTENDED 2002 TO 2007</b>	
Nuts and Bolts Conference, Nantwich, June 2007 <i>(Redeeming our Communities)</i>	27
Global Day of Prayer, Upton Park, London, May 2007	28
Unlocking our Resources, Taunton, May 2007 <i>(ReSource Training Day)</i>	29
Connecting the Connectors, Swanwick, February 2007 <i>(The Saltbox Christian Centre, Stoke-on-Trent)</i>	31
Rising Tide, Sale, June 2006 <i>(Nations Discipleship Enterprise)</i>	36
Trumpet Call IV and V Days of Prayer, NEC Birmingham with National Launch of Redeeming our Communities, May 2006 Update on Redeeming our Communities, October 2006	38
Faithworks: Intimacy and Involvement Conference, Eastbourne, October 2003	39
Community Transformation Consultation, Swanwick, November 2002 <i>(Anglican Renewal Ministries, Sharing of Ministries Abroad, Springboard)</i>	41
Summary of Key Learning Points from Conferences attended	45
Conclusion	48
Books and Resources	50

# REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

## INTRODUCTION

### **What prompted my research into Community Transformation?**

In 2001, I and others in Woking watched the first Transformation video prepared by the Sentinel Group, showing the fruit of George Otis Jr's research into how God moves in communities, bringing about changes at every level of community when his people unite and pray for their communities. The video showed this in action in diverse communities in Columbia, Kenya, California and Guatemala. Change came as God's people united in prayer. That change both transformed people's individual lives as they came into a living relationship with God, but also brought remarkable transformation to the communities as law and order, justice and socio-economic issues began to be addressed, creating a sense of well-being and security where poverty, fear and injustice had previously dominated.

It was decided that we should explore Community Transformation and seek to work out its principles in Woking. At the time I was working as Associate Minister in a town centre church in Woking. I was asked to co-ordinate this venture, which I did, working with a small steering group, between 2001 and 2005 when I retired. Various initiatives were started with the aim of bringing greater unity among church leaders, and church members. Prayer initiatives included mixed church prayer groups across town praying for the community. In collaboration with the Church Leaders, we sought to bring a prayer emphasis to Joint Church Celebrations which were already taking place on a regular basis. Some community-centred interaction resulted from these ventures.

However, I became aware that it would be helpful to learn from others further down the road than we were, and had the opportunity to arrange a sabbatical for that purpose, which would include visits to towns and cities where people were working in this way. An accident a month before I was due start this effectively put a stop to any travel, as my mobility was limited for several months. Guildford Diocese encouraged me to do the research in retirement.

### **The nature of the research**

Over the last two years I have visited five UK towns and cities, attended conferences, which gave not only excellent teaching, but opportunities for networking with others across the country, and I have learnt from further reading and other teaching resources. Arising from my experience in Woking I had three questions I wanted to address:

- What is the essence of this approach to Community Transformation?
- Does this approach come from God, or is it a passing fad?
- If it is from God, how does one engage in it so that it has an effect on the community?

### **The purpose of the reflections**

I have prepared these reflections as a working document, using a bullet point approach for easy reference. The accounts of conferences are "key points" rather than full reports, and I have avoided repetition of speaker's material where this was heard (helpfully!) more than once. My prayer is that these reflections will in some way will help forward that process of kingdom growth which is community transformation – in the UK and beyond.

*Chris Simons*

## BIBLICAL REFLECTION ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

If the essence of Community Transformation is that God will work to bring about transformation when his people unite in persevering prayer for their community, the question arises: "Is this in line with scripture?" So what does the Bible say about:

### Unity?

- Psalm 133 We are told that God bestows blessing when God's children live together in unity.
- John 17:20-26 Jesus prayed for his followers that they might be one, with the same oneness which he experienced in the Godhead.
- Eph 1:9-10 God's ultimate plan is to bring all things together under one Head, ie Christ.
- Unity is clearly important to God. In addition:
- Matt 18:19-20 He promises his presence when two or three come together, in agreement, to pray.
- Acts 1-4 The early church came together to pray frequently. The believers were "one in heart and mind" (Acts 4:32). Unity was expected, experienced and enjoyed!

### Praying for our communities?

- 2 Chron 7:11-16 After the dedication of the temple, Solomon and God's people are encouraged by God to pray for their land.
- Jer 29:1-9 Judah, in exile in Babylon, was told to settle down and seek the peace and prosperity of the city where God had placed them.
- Isa 58 God abhors pseudo-spirituality, which leaves the person praying unchanged. He looks for people who are actively engaged in promoting justice, and care of the vulnerable, through prayer and action.
- I Tim 2:1-8 In the New Testament, we are told to pray for those in authority, so that:
  - we may live peaceful and quiet lives
  - the Gospel may be preached effectively
- Community issues are clearly on God's heart, and he wants us to bring these to him in prayer, and this last passage brings together the notion that prayer for our communities not only has the effect of bringing about positive change, but that by doing so it creates a setting in which people will hear and respond to the gospel.

### Spiritual Warfare?

- As we pray for our towns and cities, God will be at work, but we are also told to be wise and alert to the fact that Satan is also active seeking to prevent or destroy what God is doing.
- Eph 6:10-20 God calls us to take a stand against the devil, putting on the armour he has made available to us.
- Eph 1:20-22 ) Christ, through his death and resurrection, has authority over all powers and
- Phil 2:6-11 ) dominions. He has conquered Satan.
- 2 Cor 10:3-5 We are called to fight using the weapons Christ provides to pull down Satan's strongholds.
- Ed Silvoso gives a telling illustration ("That None Should Perish", Regal, 1994 pp177-179). An American General in World War II was captured with his men by the Japanese and held in a remote Prisoner of War Camp. As the war drew to a close, the Allied Forces occupied more and more of the Japanese territory, and eventually the Japanese surrendered. The POW Camp Commandant became aware of this, but did not disclose this to his by now weak and emaciated prisoners. He exercised power over them based on a lie. The General continued to submit to him because he was unaware of the true state of affairs. When the Allied troops reached the camp, an American Officer found the General, and told him that Japan had surrendered. The General then went to the Japanese Camp Commandant and said quietly: "My Commander in Chief has defeated your Commander in Chief. I am in control now. You must surrender". Without a shot being fired, he took over control of the camp.

- God is in control. He calls us to exercise the authority he has given to the church to clear the ground so that his kingdom can be established. This means keeping our focus on Christ and his power, alert to but not mesmerized by the enemy, for Christ has conquered him, and in Christ we have the power and authority to overcome him.
- Some proponents of Community Transformation advocate naming territorial spirits and taking authority over them. Others take spiritual warfare seriously, and will pray with authority for their communities, but are not comfortable with the concept of territorial spirits.
- At a ReSource Day Conference on Spiritual Warfare included in these Reflections, the speaker, Peter Denton, gave the following answer to a question about “territorial spirits”:
  - Take care re getting up into the heavenlies – which is unknown territory
  - However, at ground level, if you get a shiver – PRAY!
- In other words, don’t dabble in what you don’t know, but when you get a sensing that you recognise, pray with the authority that you know you have. This seemed like helpful and sound advice.

### **The attitudes of those praying?**

- 2 Chron 7:11-22 Humility, repentance, holiness and obedience – all required when praying for The community.
- On prayer in general:
- Luke 11:1-11) Persistent, persevering and
- Luke 18:1-8 ) expecting God to answer
- James 5:13-18 Fervent
- And implicitly:
  - Dependent on God
  - Growing in trust in God
  - Deepening in our relationship with God
- Do we ask God to come - to fix things, or because we can’t live without him? As a “solution” or as our King?
- Prayers move from being about our town or city, to being about the presence of the King – with his kingdom in our midst (DVD “The Quickening”, Sentinel, 2003).

### **Listening to God?**

- There are examples of people listening to God, or failing to do so, throughout Scripture.
- Old Testament examples include judges, kings and prophets: “Should they go to war?” etc.
- Jeremiah stayed true to the clear guidance he had received that Judah would go into exile, despite the false prophets putting a positive spin on the situation.
- Nehemiah stands firm on what he had heard from God, in the face of Sanballat and Tobiah’s distracting attempts to take him off the job of rebuilding the walls of the city (Neh 6:1-16).
- Jesus was in constant touch with his Father throughout his life, hearing and seeing what his Father was doing (cf John 5:19-20).
- As we do this in a town or city setting
  - God enables us to look beyond the city’s problems to its destiny
  - We are kept from reliance on programme – taking things into our own hands
- This requires time spent waiting in his presence – till we see, hear, know... what he is showing us.

Most Christians would probably agree with the essential components of Community Transformation: unity and prayer. Over the past few years there has been a move of the Holy Spirit bringing these things together, moving people to pray together with effect for their communities. The Transformations videos show this, as does my experience of visiting UK towns and cities in the last couple of years.

I believe Scripture shows us a God of compassion, who has the world on his heart, which includes people in every community. He shares that concern with us, his people, and invites us to join together in prayer so that he can work to transform our communities, and people’s lives.

## LUTON VISITS – COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION - APRIL, MAY 2006

### Main Resourcing:

- Prayer Concert, St Mary's – 27 April, 2006
- Luton Prayer Initiative Team Meeting – 8 May, 2006
- Meetings with LPI Team Members: 8 – 9 May, 2006
- Visit to University Chaplaincy
- Brief Meeting Mike Thomas, Baptist Pastor and Chairman CTIL

**Main Contact:** Rev Malcolm Pritchard, Leader of Luton Prayer Initiative; Vicar, St Matthew's, Luton

### Background:

#### How Luton Churches work together

- There are 125 churches in Luton, of which 56 are black churches.
- Churches Together in Luton embraces all churches which choose to join, which would be the majority.
- In 2002, following a town-wide J John "Just 10" mission, Transforming Luton was formed with a membership of around 60 primarily charismatic evangelical churches, both black and white or mixed ethnicity and works in partnership with Churches Together in Luton.
- Transforming Luton's vision is to see Luton society transformed through three main activities: prayer, celebration and mission.
- Luton Prayer Initiative was formed at the same time to look after the prayer side of Transforming Luton.
- Transforming Luton is led by a Steering Team, and Luton church leaders meet regularly to pray and plan celebrations and evangelistic events.

### Activities

- Churches Together in Luton has member churches from a wide spectrum of denominations. It works in partnership with Transforming Luton, and provides support and co-ordination for many Christian initiatives in Luton, including:
  - Luton Christian Education Trust – a major initiative, launched in 1993, LCET works effectively with young people aged 11 – 14, and 15 – 19, through schools providing opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It has a full-time staff, and is valued in the town – for more, see website:  
[www.lutonchurches.org.uk/Churches\\_together\\_in\\_luton.htm](http://www.lutonchurches.org.uk/Churches_together_in_luton.htm)
- **Examples of Transforming Luton's activities would be:**
  - Pentecost Praise at 6.30 pm at St Mary's, Luton – a joint celebration; also: Praise in the Park on 9 July; Joint Alpha Supper on 20 September; outreach events have simultaneous prayer cover – for more, see:
  - Website: [www.lutonchurches.org.uk/transforming.htm](http://www.lutonchurches.org.uk/transforming.htm)
- **Luton Prayer Initiative activities include:**
  - Prayer Concerts – four times a year
  - Prayer Walks – eg River Lea, Waulads Bank, Town Centre.
  - Prayer Groups across town
  - 24 hours of prayer with participation by people of all ages across the town
  - Prayer for and during major Transforming Luton events
  - LPI website: [www.prayforluton.org.uk](http://www.prayforluton.org.uk)

### Luton Prayer Initiative

- Luton Prayer Initiative is co-ordinated by a team which is led by Rev Malcolm Pritchard, Vicar of St Matthew's, Luton. Its life and way of working was informed by David and Vivienne Viol, from Cornwall, whom Malcolm visited prior to its inception.

- The team had 8 members when I visited, and Malcolm is hoping to recruit more to spread the responsibilities. Each team member has a particular area of responsibility (eg Prayer Groups, Prayer Walks, Worship etc). The team meets regularly to pray, plan and evaluate.
  - Prayer Concerts - one member of the team co-ordinates the practical arrangements for the Prayer Concerts, and another the worship, which draws on musicians from different churches. The whole team plan and oversee the concerts, and then evaluate them afterwards, seeking to learn together through this. There is a strong emphasis on listening to God, and when I attended, they were experimenting with an approach which was less “led from the front” than previously, and more “led by the congregation” through allowing plenty of time for prophetic words, pictures – both in plenary and in groups. Attendance varies, but was around 150 the night I was there. The evening included a lot of time for worship and prayer. There were also helpful testimonies (planned) and fellowship. There was a strong sense of God’s presence, and of God at work and feedback on the LPI website: [www.prayforluton.org.uk](http://www.prayforluton.org.uk) shows this.
  - Prayer Walks – research along spiritual mapping lines is undertaken as particular needs arise, and then a Prayer Walk is arranged in the area where prayer is thought to be needed. People come on the walks by invitation. In recent years walks were arranged along the River Lea, Waulads Bank, and in the Town Centre. The team acknowledged that it is hard to know the effect of such praying, but were aware at the time when Vauxhall closed down in Luton, which was given much prayer, it did not have the devastating effect experienced by the Longbridge closure. Most Vauxhall employees found employment locally, or set up in new entrepreneurial initiatives, which was good for the town.
  - Prayer Groups – over 4 years, 44 groups have come into being across the town. These are primarily of mixed church membership, but also include one or two single church prayer groups who pray for the town. The co-ordination of these groups is loose, allowing flexibility, but there is a recognised need for someone to pastor these groups. People sign up for the groups at the Prayer Concerts. After some years of praying for Dunstable, there is now a Prayer Group in Dunstable itself.
  - 24 hours of prayer – LPI has organised 24 hour periods of prayer on several occasions. People of all ages from different churches right across town have taken part.
  - Prayer during Events – when Transforming Luton arranges major events, (eg Praise in the Park), the LPI team ensures that there is a team of people praying throughout the event.
  - Communication – this is seen to be vital, and good quality publicity, and an up-to-date website [www.prayforluton.org.uk](http://www.prayforluton.org.uk) is their aim.
  - Chaplaincy Support – LPI also prays for the work of the University of Luton Chaplaincy, and one of the Team Members is involved in its English Conversation Classes, which it offers to overseas students of which many come from China.
  
- **Shared Vision**
  - Transforming Luton and Luton Prayer Initiative share the vision to see Luton won for Christ, and community issues addressed.
  - Churches Together in Luton shares that vision, but with the balance of emphasis on service to the community earthed in social need.
  
- **Concerns expressed**
  - The LPI team are aware that of the 60 Church Leaders involved in Transforming Luton, only a small number come to Luton Prayer Initiative events. One member of the team had the sense that they were the praying arm of TL who had been “left to do the praying”, where they actually see their role as mobilising all Christians in Luton to pray. There is great support among lay people of all churches, but they would like to see Church Leaders more actively involved.
  - Obstacles to united prayer were identified by one team member as: busyness, ambition and lack of trust.

- **Positive outcomes expressed**

- It was noted that when people unite in prayer, trust grows as Christians discover that people from different church backgrounds have the same things on their hearts.

**Key Learning Points:**

- The importance the Luton Prayer Initiative Team put on listening to God, as a team, and in all its prayer activities.
- A deep level of trust was evident among members of the Luton Prayer Initiative Team, as was their commitment to mobilise Christians in Luton to pray for the town, despite the fact that some (?all) were overstretched in terms of time commitment.
- The value of a Worship Co-ordinator on the team, who could bring together Worship Teams with musicians from different churches for large events.
- The need to engage Church Leaders in giving a lead in united prayer for Luton, rather than seeing LPI as a “specialist prayer arm of the church”.
- The need for greater collaboration between Transforming Luton, Churches Together in Luton and Luton Prayer Initiative.

**Update December 2007:**

- Since completing this report, I have learnt that Luton Prayer Initiative has changed its name to “Transforming Luton Prayer”. This reflects the greater integration that has occurred during the last year, as those involved in co-ordinating prayer and the Steering Team of Transforming Luton work more closely together.

## LIVERPOOL VISIT – COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION - JUNE 2006

### Main Resourcing

- Conversations with Sue Sinclair, Leader of CommUNITY Watchmen Ministries - May/Jun 06
- CWM Team Meeting at Strawberry Field - 9 Jun, 2006
- “Impacting the City” by Martin Scott, Ch 7 “Liverpool – a Gateway City” by Sue Sinclair
- Visit to Liverpool City Centre - 10 Jun, 2006
- Sunday Worship at Liverpool Cathedral - 11 Jun, 2006

**Main Contact:** Sue Sinclair, Leader Community Watchmen Ministries and DrugsNET

### Background

- CommUNITY Watchmen Ministries is one among many prayer initiatives which God has raised up in Liverpool. I was pointed in the direction of Sue Sinclair, and the following account tells her story as she learnt to pray and mobilise prayer for the city. Although, as she has pointed out to me, CWM is just a part of the prayer base for Liverpool, I found there was much to learn from her journey.
- In 1999 Sue was involved in an evangelistic event which, in spite of massive investment of time, energy and gifts by all concerned, yielded little fruit. Aware that in John 4:35 Jesus encouraged his disciples “to look on the fields, which were white, ready for harvest “ she found that her experience did not tally with this. As she asked the Lord about this, He told her “to get out on the High Street and see what I see”. As she spent time with others, walking round her local town listening to God, they began to notice things they had never seen before, including getting a sense of a spirit of death in the area. They weren’t sure what to do with this. Two days later, two men were shot at a Gym in the town, confirming the accuracy of what they had sensed.
- Sue became clear that God was calling her to learn to pray, and to mobilise others to pray too.
- She gave up her paid work in order to give priority to this.

### Early Prayer Initiatives

- Neighbourhood Houses of Prayer were set up, with people encouraged to pray for their families, neighbours, friends and colleagues; at each meeting, information would be given about a different community organisation for prayer.
- In 2001, Martin Scott came to the city with a Sowing Seeds for Revival Team, and spoke about the history of the land, how curses can come upon the land, and how to cleanse the land. He challenged those present to get involved in prayer and action for Liverpool at what he saw as a strategic moment in the city’s history. He was also given a prophetic word that Liverpool would become “The European Capital of Culture”. In 2003 Liverpool was selected as just that for 2008!
- Liverpool’s history includes bloodshed and death, the slave trade, a role in the potato famine in Northern Ireland, riots in the 1980’s, the Heysel and Hillsborough Disasters, and bitter religious divisions between Roman Catholics and Protestants. On the plus-side, it includes The Beatles, two major football clubs, being the gateway for millions starting a new life in America and great diversity. Spiritually, it has twice experienced revivals, through the Jeffries Brothers (UK Pentecostal Pioneers) and Evan Roberts in Bootle (a key figure in the Welsh Revival in 1904–05).
- At this time Sue also received prophetic words that she would set up a mobile School of Prayer for the Mersey Region.
- Sue began to research her own local area of Seaforth and Waterloo so that they could pray in an informed way. She was shocked to discover that people were dying prematurely for a variety of health-related reasons, and that the fertility rate was poor.
- A group prayer-walked the area during 2002, repenting of the use of money from the slave-trade used in the area, taking back authority over the land, and praying into current needs.
- Since then, a new Community Nursing Team has been appointed to the area, which is resolving some of the health issues. The area has also been awarded funding for regeneration.

- A decision re road changes, which were deemed unsuitable for the area, was successfully contested, and as a result, a local Councillor became a Christian, and Sue was invited on to the Local Strategic Partnership.

### **DrugsNET**

- In 2002, impacted by both the first Transformation Video, where God turned the drug scene around through prayer in Cali Colombia, and a leaked letter from the Chief Constable of Merseyside: “Liverpool is now the Drugs Distribution Capital of the UK” Sue sought the Lord for a solution. The word which came to her was: “It’s time for the church to arise and to declare a STOP and a turning of this tide of evil” and that is a key for transformation. In her words, “I asked the Lord: How?” and he gave me a simple strategy: within 3 days, DrugsNET was born.
- DrugsNET is a prayer initiative working in partnership with the police to establish prayer targets in order to see drug-related crime eradicated from the community.
- Some of those targets include:
  - The young people of the region and the protection of their schools
  - The drugs distribution networks eg roads, docks, airports
  - The drugs gang leaders
  - The protection of our police and their families, and for wisdom and insight
  - The addicts and those who prostitute themselves to finance their supplies
  - Those ministering to drug addicts
- Since DrugsNET was set up, Liverpool has seen a huge increase in drug seizures, and a substantial increase in funding for the region to help deal with drug problems. For more information see website [www.cwministries.org.uk](http://www.cwministries.org.uk) or email: [drugsnet@hotmail.com](mailto:drugsnet@hotmail.com)

### **Together for Harvest**

- Together for Harvest (TFH) is a network of churches of all denominations set up by the Evangelical Alliance in the Merseyside region – see [www.tfh.org.uk](http://www.tfh.org.uk) Its aim is to encourage the partnership of church leaders, individuals and churches to enable the transformation of society, with a harvest of people turning to Christ as part of that vision. Key in this is to see the Church characterized by unity and togetherness of purpose, rather than rancour and competitiveness.
- Sue had had a vision of the ships and boats at Dunkirk – all shapes and sizes sailing together with the protection of the armed forces on their rescue mission – and they succeeded, bringing the stranded soldiers home. This seemed to be a picture of the churches working together under God’s protection.
- In 2002, Sue was invited to become Prayer Co-ordinator for TFH.
- During her time in that role various prayer activities were initiated:
  - United Prayer Gatherings: “Heaven on Earth”
  - Prayer Conferences: “Hungry for God”
  - 24/7 Prayer
  - Leaders’ Prayer Cells
- In 2003 planning began for “MerseyFest”, a massive City-wide festival along the lines of “Message 2000”. The Festival Manchester team invited the MerseyFest team to come and learn with them, as they prepared for a similar festival a year earlier. As the teams came together, God dealt with barriers between the two cities that had existed for years.
- Sue co-ordinated most of the prayer for “MerseyFest” which was held in 2005 with great effect.

### **CommUNITY Watchmen Ministries**

- Following this, Sue felt God was calling her out of TFH. She now focuses on the work of CommUNITY Watchmen Ministries, which she leads - with its focus on prayer - see [www.cwministries.org.uk](http://www.cwministries.org.uk).

- Two key initiatives of CWM are:
  - DrugsNET – already outlined, and
  - The Mobile Prayer School, which operates in the North West of England. The team responds to requests for training in prayer, and offers Weekend or Evening Session courses, taken up by churches, Churches Together and other groups. Two booklets have been written to help:
    - Prayer Keys for Transformation – which gives the main teaching from Prayer School
    - Prayer Diary - with scriptures to use in praying effectively for the community
- Through prayer, Sue and other CWM Team Members have been led to visit a number of places in order to pray, including: Heysel, Hillsborough, Washington, Stormont and Westminster – see website.
- The CWM Office is at Strawberry Field (as in The Beatles), a house owned and run by the Salvation Army, and currently the home of the "Liverpool Boiler Room" and is set up very creatively for prayer, and is in constant use as a 24-7-365 Prayer Centre, used by all the churches. For more information, contact: [merseyside24-7@merseymail.com](mailto:merseyside24-7@merseymail.com)
- Sue continues her work with the Local Strategic Partnership, which enables her to contribute to policy-making on a wide range of issues affecting the community.
- She is also on the Crime Reduction Group.
- In both these roles she works closely with both the Local Authority and the Police, which enables her to hear God "in the market-place".
- She is also hearing God in the sanctuary, as she prays with the CWM Team, and the combination has been very effective. On one occasion, the DrugsNET team had a sense that the police should search for drugs in a particular place. Somewhat in fear and trepidation, Sue risked offering this sensing to a somewhat sceptical Police Officer, who acted on it and found it was spot on! He now refers to God as "his snout"! Or as Sue puts it: "I think it is more about praying on site with insight".
- CWM also collaborates with other Prayer Organisations, such as Lydia Groups, AGLOW, and Prayer Meetings organised by churches, TFH and Churches Together in Liverpool.
- She sees CWM's role, and her role now, as "working behind the enemy lines" rather than in "the front line", so while she remains in touch with some church leaders, it is recognised that her role is now different from when she was co-ordinating prayer for the churches.

### **Changes in the City**

- Sue is amazed at the changes that have taken place over the last few years in Liverpool. Educational achievement is up; the roads have improved; communities are gaining confidence; crime is down, though the fear of crime is still high; and the quality of the water in Liverpool has improved significantly – it is now said to be the cleanest it has been in 100 years.
- There is a sense of hope and purpose – it is almost as though it is "a city with a spring in its step!" This is something which I noticed during my brief visit there.

### **Key Learning Points**

- The amazing way God can use someone with a heart open to him, who is listening to him and obedient to him.
- The simplicity of some of God's answers, leading to effective prayer and action: eg "Get out on the High Street and see as I see", and DrugsNET.
- Engagement with the Local Authority and Police, as led by God, and the effectiveness of listening to God in "the market-place" and in "the sanctuary".
- The vision for unity among the churches – Dunkirk picture – all sizes sailing together, single purpose, effectively achieved together, under God's protection.
- The mobile School of Prayer – training people to pray – across the churches, and the region.
- The power of the prophetic word, rightly heard and applied.

## MANCHESTER VISIT – COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION - JUNE 2006

### Main resourcing:

- Redeeming our Communities Launch NEC (13 May 06); Update (21 Oct 06)
- Meeting with Debra Green - 9 June 06
- “City Changing Prayer” by Debra and Frank Green, published by Kingsway/Survivor 2005

**Main Contact:** Debra Green, Director of CityLinks and Redeeming our Communities

### Background

- Early 1990's Debra and Frank Green's vision and call to get Christians in Manchester to pray together for the city.
- Frank as Pastor of Ivy Cottage Church, Debra as Leader of the city-wide Prayer Network which came into being.
- Prophetic words and pictures led to initial steps, including a large prayer gathering (October '93) with a well-known speaker, and worship band made up of musicians from different churches.
- A Prayer Network Core Group was formed of people with a shared vision, a heart for the city, who loved each other, respected differences, and met regularly to plan meetings.
- A monthly Prayer Lunch for Church Leaders was started which was hosted by different churches. The quarterly Large Prayer Gatherings developed, moving from an open programme to well-researched themes, with written information for prayer, no “big” speaker, but Christians in the field/secular leaders in field invited to come and share prayer needs.
- Major events in Manchester helped Prayer Network and move forward as people wanted to unite in prayer for these: eg. March for Jesus, Soul Survivor Message 2000, Festival Manchester and the Commonwealth Games
- Message 2000 – Prayer Network focused on this for a year. Initiatives included 2 Prayer Walls around the city, a Large Prayer Gathering (2000) at the Apollo Theatre, and a Prayer Marquee during the event.
- The support offered to Community Leaders through prayer and affirmation strengthened relationships between Civic Leaders, Police and others and enhanced cooperation.
- In the late 1990's, influenced by the teaching of Ed Silivoso, the idea of working with other cities rather than just Manchester began to take shape. Debra sensed a call to bring towns and cities together, initially in North West. She handed over Central Manchester Prayer Network, but continued with satellite towns along the same lines [www.citylinks.org.uk](http://www.citylinks.org.uk)
- This led on to contact with Liverpool and other major towns and cities North West, and the North West Launch of Redeeming our Communities in 2004 which was characterized by reconciliation, collaboration, prayer, unity, and shared outreach.
- In 2005 the National Launch of Redeeming our Communities took place at the NEC in Birmingham with Debra's work now focused on resourcing towns and cities across the UK.
- [www.redeemingourcommunities.org.uk](http://www.redeemingourcommunities.org.uk)

### Activities and Key Learning Points

- Church Leaders
  - Individual contact with Church Leaders was an important factor in gaining interest and ownership of Prayer Network
  - Church Leaders' Gathering was started in '96 to enable networking and to provide leaders with support. Manchester started a weekly lunch, but this proved not to be viable. They settled for monthly on a Bring Your Own Lunch basis, with different churches hosting. They then switched to providing lunch at one church, and the catering is now done by a volunteer team. Numbers grew when lunch was provided. They meet from 12.30 -2.00pm and the time includes worship, interviews, updates, prayer in threes and a prompt finish. In 2005 City Links launched a regional event for leaders, now attended by over 300.

- Large Prayer Gatherings
  - These developed on a quarterly basis with prayer as the central activity. They are not a celebration with prayer tacked on. There is no big name speaker – but each meeting has a theme. This is well researched, and secular leaders and Christians working in the field are invited. Interviews provide information and prayer needs. Factsheets for prayer are also given out.
  - Prayer information: the focus is on the positive of what is happening in the community, rather than the negative, and affirmation of those working in the field is seen as key (eg when praying for the NHS: bless what is good, rather than focusing on deficiencies).
  - Worship - musicians are drawn from different churches in order to gain ownership. This is time-intensive, but effective.
  - The format and style of the gathering is fast-moving, with pace, movement, variety, and light touch leadership.
  - A prompt start and finish is seen as essential.
  - Inclusivity is an important feature. The Core Team have adopted an approach based on “the Radical Middle Ground” (Charismatic Evangelical core values, but inclusive of others in approaches to prayer, tradition etc,) so meetings include all forms of prayer.
  - Inclusivity also means mobilising all Christians to pray, not just intercessors or prayer warriors.
  - For the Core Team who oversee and plan Prayer Network, two things stand out as vital: relationship: they have grown to love and enjoy one another; and hearing God: for the themes, and more broadly for all they do.
  - There is gifted team who provide skills and leadership in the following areas:
    - graphics, stewarding, PA, admin/IT.
  - Excellence is another important value which makes these prayer gatherings work, in publicity, PA, communication including regular updates (internet, email, texting, snailmail).
- Leadership of Prayer Network
  - Having gifted leader as a figurehead, anointed for this purpose, with understanding of the church, and respect for its many expressions, and able to hold the Prayer Network in the Radical Middle Ground is seen as vital.
  - A gifted Core Group working with Leader, hearing God together, researching, planning, making it happen is also seen as essential.
- Resourcing Major Community Events
  - Churches and individuals were added to Prayer Network through prayer for major city-wide events because of the focus.
  - Working with Community Leaders for these events has opened doors to ongoing greater co-operation between church and community.
- Communication
  - Keeping people in touch with Prayer Network news, events, prophetic words and prayer requests through bulletins in the early days, then the website plus email and multiple texting for prayer requests has also been key.

### **Identificational Repentance**

In a helpful appendix to “City Changing Prayer”, Frank Green looks honestly and thoroughly into the issue of “identificational repentance” which is advocated by several proponents of Community Transformation. He clarifies the difference between:

- Vicarious repentance, which he sees as people today taking responsibility for past sins committed by their community, and repenting on behalf of others. He sees this as non-biblical, and
- Identificational repentance, which he sees as people today owning shared responsibility for current situations, while not acknowledging responsibility for the evil actions that set it in motion. (Helpful eg pp 209-210: At a conference in Northern Ireland, he and Debra felt able to share in a sense of responsibility for the current situation in that land, whilst not taking responsibility for the evil actions that initiated The Troubles, identified here as “the plantation of Scottish and English Protestants in Ulster by the Government in the 17 century to dispossess Catholics of their land and property”).

- Identificational repentance, properly used:
  - Is outward looking – for other people, the city, the nation. As such, it has a strong Mission thrust.
  - Moves the church from Western individualism to incarnational, involved evangelism. The whole concept is corporate in nature.
  - Moves the church away from triumphalism.

But, he adds warnings:

- It is not the sole essential to revival.
- When raised, it needs to be tested by the appropriate level of leadership. It is often initiated by splinter groups independent of recognized church authority.
- It can dominate some people's lives, causing them to become inward-looking.
- It can become a "conference-setter".

## STOKE-ON-TRENT VISITS - COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION - JUNE 2006

### Main Resourcing

- Meetings with Lloyd Cooke, Director of Saltbox Christian Centre -12/28 June, 2006
- 2C7 Leaders' Meeting - 26 June, 2006
- Cross Rhythms, Jon Bellamy - 26 June, 2006
- St Paul's, Blurton, (Anglican), Dave Street - 27 June, 2006
- Church WOW (Anglican), Gordon Crowther - 27 June, 2006
- Bridge Centre/Potter's House (Methodist Roots) Phil Barber - 28 June, 2006
- Meeting with Linda Williams (Saltbox) - 28 June, 2006
- YMCA , Danny Flynn - 28 June, 2006
- 2C7 Evening Meeting - 28 June, 2006

**Main contact:** Lloyd Cooke, Director of Saltbox Christian Centre

### Background

- "Stoke" is made up of 6 towns: Burslem, Fenton, Hanley, Longton, Stoke and Tunstall. Alongside these are Newcastle-under-Lyme and the villages and small towns of the wider North Staffordshire area.
- Stoke has a history of being fiercely working-class and rather parochial in its thinking. The main industries of the past were the potteries, mining and steel.
- The Saltbox Christian Centre was set up as a resource for the area by Christian laymen in 1982. Its role till the early 1990s was fairly hidden, when it began to co-ordinate large events in the North Staffordshire area, to act as a press agency for the churches, and began to gain credibility with the church leaders through its servant ministry.
- Saltbox currently has eight paid members of staff, and Lloyd Cooke is Director and, with the team, has developed the work over the last decade or so. Robert Mountford of City Vision Ministries works in collaboration with Lloyd. Saltbox is currently in touch with the majority of the 200+ churches in the North Staffs area and works closely with about 80 leaders.
- In 2001 Stoke was identified as the most socio-economically deprived city in the country.
- This produced a sense of quiet desperation among Christians in the town. 25 Church Leaders met to pray together for a day, and this culminated in a one-off evening of prayer to which 200 people came. The evening was repeated one month later, with 350 attending, and again a month after (on 30 December!) with 500 turning out!
- At these meetings Community Leaders (not necessarily Christian) were invited to share needs from their area of responsibility (eg. Elected Mayor, Councillors, Police etc) and people prayed.
- All this coincided with the advent of the Transformations videos, and the Community Transformation teaching has helped to shape the development of churches working together.
- There is no mega-church in Stoke, which helps unity, but has meant that there has been no one large church dominating with a city-wide vision, though many are actively engaged in community concerns in their areas.

### City- and Area-wide Initiatives

- Under Saltbox leadership, the 2001 Prayer Gatherings have continued and have been developed as **2C7 meetings**. **2C7 = 2 Chronicles 7** (esp 11-15).
- The main **2C7 Prayer Gathering** meets on the last Wednesday evening of each month, and has plateaued to around 100+ people. On the Monday before, between 60-70 **church leaders meet** from 10am – lunch-time for fellowship, prayer and sharing and lunch is served by the hosting church (Bethel Pentecostal Church).
- Over the last 4 years, **2C7** has created and enabled **networking links** with many groups among the churches (Intercessors, Youth Leaders, Worship Leaders, Church Leaders, New Churches, Local Christian Media, Groups responding to pastoral needs – asylum seekers, prostitutes, domestic violence etc, as well as local political and interest groups, and community contacts – statutory and voluntary). (See [www.saltbox.org.uk](http://www.saltbox.org.uk) - 2C7 Growth and Influence).

- **2C7** identifies **7 community sectors** where it prays to have a godly influence: Business, Community, Education, Health, Law, Media and Arts, and Politics. It sees the Kingdom of God invading and incarnating these areas, and identifies **3 Kingdom Priorities**:  
1) Building strategic relationships. 2) Praying for strategic appointments 3) Developing strategic outcomes - see website.
- The 2C7 goal is Community Transformation for the glory of God. This requires: a passion for the city, and a commitment to prayer. Its **seven Foundational Values** are listed in Saltbox website and in my “Connecting the Connectors Conference” Reflections.
- Apart from the activities included above, **2C7** has co-ordinated:  
**city-wide missions** including “A Time for Healing . . . A Touch of Heaven” with Craig Marsh in 2006 (Appendix 4) which touched many lives;  
**a Prayer Walk**, with spiritual mapping, along the length of the River Trent, linking with other Christians in the towns and cities along the route; and  
**24/7 Prayer** with churches participating across the North Staffs area – see website for more information on all activities.
- **A Faith Action Audit** was undertaken in 2005/06. It identified community action and service undertaken by all the Faith Groups in Stoke itself with a view to avoiding duplication and to recommending areas where further action is needed. The audit was prepared by Linda Williams, a Social Care Networker, with Froukje Cradock of FaithWorks, under the auspices of Saltbox and was funded by Stoke-on-Trent Council. Amongst its findings was that the church is serving the wider community through 235 projects or activities, 70% of which are in disadvantaged areas. Volunteer hours amount to 5000 hours pa, which is the equivalent of 130 full-time jobs, and potentially £1.25 million pounds being given by the church to the community. Copies available on request. Contact: [email@saltbox.org.uk](mailto:email@saltbox.org.uk) or I also have a few copies. Contact me at: [chris@spaceagenow.co.uk](mailto:chris@spaceagenow.co.uk)
- **Cross Rhythms** is a Christian Community Radio Station with a 4 year history in Stoke. It has recently been awarded an FM licence for a further 5 years. Jon Bellamy, who with his wife runs it, sees its role as outreach to the community rather than servicing the Christian community. It is primarily a music station, and they aim to reach non-Christians by playing good Christian Rock and Rap music. They also interview Community Leaders, inviting them to use the station to share their vision for their areas of community life. There is evidence, both through feedback and through their website that they are having an impact on people. The whole operation is based on hearing God, and is soaked in prayer.
- **The YMCA** in Stoke is one of six YMCA Centres in the East Midlands. Danny Flynn, a former Pioneer Pastor in the city, is the CEO. The YMCA’s vision since its inception has been to bring about social transformation, and in Stoke it does this in a variety of ways, providing accommodation for some, as well as support, training, and opportunities for development. I was impressed both by the general atmosphere of the Centre which conveyed love and hope, and vibrant life and by seeing the CEO and other staff in action embodying the values of the organisation. For more information, see [www.ymca.org.uk](http://www.ymca.org.uk)

## City-wide Vision

### a) Churches visited:

#### St Paul’s, Blurton (Anglican)

I was shown round by Dave Street, who at the time was a part-time Caretaker, but is also the Worship Leader, and has applied to train for the ministry. Dave has been a member of St Paul’s for many years. During that time St Paul’s, under the leadership of a Vicar with a heart for mission, grew and became a thriving church. The emphasis during that time was on lay ministry, which was strengthened as the Vicar led teams to minister in Africa, and trained people in leadership. He was followed by a Vicar with a strong teaching ministry, but without an emphasis on lay ministry. The congregation dropped from 250 to 70. The church has been without a Vicar for some time, and at the time of my visit was in an experimental period with leadership shared by Robert Mountford, of City Vision Ministries, also an Assemblies of God Pastor, who gives 25% of his time, and Linda Williams, a Social Care Networker working with Saltbox, who oversees the community projects, with Dave Street co-ordinating and leading the worship. This is a temporary arrangement. Community projects include: a Schools Out Club, providing after-school care services; a Carers and Toddlers Group one morning a week; a

Teenagers' Club; and the premises are available and used by other organisations offering a variety of services and support to the community.

#### The Potter's House - formerly The Bridge Centre Trust (Methodist)

Phil Barber is the Minister of this church with a large vision. The church had been meeting in a Comprehensive School, which decided to rebuild in its extensive grounds. The church put in an offer for the existing building, and was able to buy it for £200,000 as against its original price of £3,500,000! This took place the year before my visit, and the premises were being re-furnished and decorated while I was there – both by building firms and church members. The vision is that this Centre will be used for three purposes: as a Church, as a Conference Centre and to facilitate Business Enterprise by offering Start-up Offices at reasonable rent for a year. It will also include a Café and a Coffee Bar. By encouraging business entrepreneurship, and in particular in the area of design and the arts, Phil believes they will be contributing to community transformation in Stoke-on-Trent. Stoke has a long history of a working class approach to life, with people lacking initiative and a sense of self-worth and confidence. Yet with The Potteries background there is an untapped resource of creative skills. Phil sees The Potter's House giving them both the opportunity, and leadership training in order to break through this cap-doffing inertia.

He also believes that Stoke needs “a large church”, which could give a lead in community transformation, and senses that God is calling them to provide this for the city.

#### Church without Walls (Anglican)

Gordon Crowther, and his wife Judy, are working along “Mission-shaped Church” lines, aiming to form a church through people's natural networks through work or interest, rather than through geographical location. They had previously planted a church in Hammersmith successfully along more traditional lines. Gordon sees establishing a Church without Walls as a long haul project. Over the last 18 months they have a group of 25 people, which includes 12 children. The majority of adults are in their twenties to forties. They meet on a Sunday afternoon in a city-centre wine bar, and during the week, in Cell Groups. Gordon is also beginning to see a way forward of contacting and establishing a similar networked church for eighteen to twenty-five year-olds. However, he is aware of some issues which present problems: they have no adequate provision for children, and because Stoke is a place where people naturally relate geographically, he is not sure it is the best place for this model of church. He is also beginning to wonder if they need “walls”.

#### **b) City Vision Ministries**

Robert Mountford founded and heads up City Vision Ministries. CVM is inter-denominational, and is a teaching, research, prayer and networking agency working among churches in Stoke-on-Trent in collaboration with Saltbox. As such it has been a valuable resource for much that has happened there in the 2C7 movement, in particular spiritual mapping which has provided well-researched information about the area for prayer. CVM now operates nationally and internationally as well as locally in Stoke, through Robert's role as a director of the British Assemblies of God World Ministries, and through his involvement in Together in Mission which promotes church planting in Britain through denominational churches.

### **Concerns Expressed**

- 1) Much of the 2C7 vision and planning is in the hands of a group largely made up of church leaders who grew up in Stoke. This concern was expressed to me by a church leader who is an incomer, and believes in the vision, but is not part of that group. It was also expressed by a church leader who is part of the group. Both were very supportive of the vision, but concerned about the process. The leadership gives a strong steer, but for the strength it now has not to be undermined by relational cracks, it would seem to me that a prayerful evaluation of leadership style and structures, which have come about through rapid and positive growth, would be essential for continued growth.
- 2) Some of the church leaders who value the regular church leaders' gatherings for support and networking, do not share the vision of those who lead 2C7. This is the other side of the first concern. Lloyd is aware of this, and sees it as something which will come gradually. This may well be the case. The conundrum seems to be: “How do you maintain strong clear leadership and at the same time strengthen committed participation in, and ownership of, a vision for a transformed city?”

## **Key Learning Points**

- 1) A change in attitude by local political leaders towards the church in Stoke has come about as Church Leaders have engaged with them in different forums, especially the Local Strategic Partnership, in order to bring about change in the city. As younger Church Leaders have become involved in this process, the church has begun to be seen as young and visionary, and to be taken seriously. Relationships have been built, providing a strong basis for co-operation, action and achievement of goals.
- 2) Inclusive monthly Church Leaders' Meetings, plus Away Days, with a variety of activities which enable relationship-building, worship and prayer, mutual learning through input by participants – all providing an acknowledged safe place of mutual support and trust.
- 3) Monthly Prayer Gatherings for all Christians, have built trust and provided a basis for united action. The importance of keeping the Prayer Gatherings user-friendly and inclusive, with a variety of prayer styles and content, has also been important. Prayer based on well-researched Community Services or Projects, presented by those involved (secular and Christian) builds trust as well as inviting God to strengthen and bless these Services.
- 4) Encouraging prayer into positive issues as well as praying protectively over negative issues has also been important. Robert Mountford's historical research into the area has been key in this, and includes positively seeing what God is doing and blessing that.
- 5) Direction-setting for the ongoing journey: both Robert and Lloyd put emphasis on hearing God now through mind and spirit: "What is God doing?" "What is in my heart?" "What am I thinking?"
- 6) Noting the difference between a city-wide vision, and the involvement of local churches in community issues or services in their local area. There is a place for both, but there is a difference.

## IPSWICH VISIT - COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION - JULY 2006

### Main Resourcing

- Meeting with Liz Beaton and Catherine Fenn 14 July, 2006
  - Liz Beaton: Co-ordinator of Ipswich in Prayer and Ipswich Town Pastors
  - Catherine Fenn: Ipswich Town Pastor and Trustee of "Release"
- Out with Town Pastors 10 – 12pm; with Prayer Team 12pm – 4am 14 July, 2006

**Main Contact:** Liz Beaton, Co-ordinator of Ipswich in Prayer, and Ipswich Town Pastors

### Background

- In 1999, Liz Beaton sensed God was telling her to give up her job as a secondary school teacher because he had other work for her to do. After a year spent in prayer, seeking his will, she sensed He was saying: "Pray for Ipswich". Through contact with Paul Hardingham, an Anglican Vicar in the town, doors were pushed and opened for Liz to be commissioned to promote and encourage prayer in Ipswich through IPEC (Ipswich Partnership of Evangelical Churches). As a result, Ipswich in Prayer was launched. See [www.ipswichinprayer.org](http://www.ipswichinprayer.org)

### Ipswich in Prayer

- As part of the launch, Liz Beaton was introduced to Church Leaders at a meeting, and since then has sought to build relationships through personal contact with each one.
- From the start there was a strong emphasis on listening to God, and following His direction, which came through Scripture, prophetic words and pictures. Early on a number of Church Leaders had a similar picture of a powerhouse set in the centre of a circle with fires on the perimeter fed by the powerhouse. The circle was interpreted as the town. The pipes between the powerhouse and the perimeter fires brought warmth and a glow to the areas of the town in between. 2 Chronicles 7:14 was another key verse in those early days, and a direct word: "Behold I have begun a great work".
- Ipswich in Prayer comes under the auspices of IPEC, but also works closely with other groupings of churches in Ipswich: Churches Together in Ipswich and Concern.
- Prayer Breakfasts for Church Leaders began, initially bi-monthly, moving to monthly. These are open to assistant clergy, youth leaders and other lay leaders, as well as to senior pastors.
- Evening Prayer Gatherings for all church members from 8 – 10 pm began on a monthly basis.
- An Email network for prayer was set up with people joining as Ipswich Prayer Contacts. Requests come in from individuals and churches, and are passed on to all on the list.
- A monthly Prayer Focus sheet was distributed, with requests from all the churches for the following month.
- Other Prayer Events included "A Day of Prayer" in which each church prayer-walked their area during the day, and all the churches came together for an Evening of Prayer. A Prayer Week was also held.
- On a more permanent basis, other Ipswich in Prayer initiatives (more on website) now include:
  - Prayer Shield: this is made up of 30 minute slots throughout the day and night, seven days a week – basically 24/7 prayer cover for Ipswich and the villages.
  - Powersurge: Through Powersurge, Ipswich in Prayer in partnership with CYM, aims to provide a safe environment where young people aged 11-18 can learn to pray through practising creative prayer.
  - 40 Days of Prayer for Ipswich: this is an undated booklet, giving a verse for meditation, topics for prayer for the church, and for the town for each of the forty days. It is written in such a way that it can be used at any time. (Free download available on website).
  - Release! Ipswich: this organization has been set up by IIP to help people with addictive behaviour find the release and wholeness available in Christ. It is administered by Trustees, and makes use of a 12-step recovery course entitled "Celebrate Recovery" See [www.celebraterrecovery.com](http://www.celebraterrecovery.com)

## Ipswich Town Pastors

- In 2003, Sue Sinclair and her colleague from “The Watchmen Team” in Liverpool came to Ipswich to share about the work of DrugsNET in Liverpool. As a result, Liz pushed doors to see if it was possible to establish links with the police in Ipswich. She was invited to be a member of the Crime Reduction Panel. During the autumn of 2005, Liz mentioned the work of “Street Pastors” in Southend and elsewhere. The Police Sergeant chairing the panel, who had up till then been cynical about any role the church might have, latched on to the idea, and the churches were asked to run a pilot project in the run up to Christmas 2005 in Ipswich Town Centre. A small team drawn from different churches underwent training and over 3 nights proved invaluable to the police in de-fusing situations, and in providing additional support. As a result the churches were asked to consider providing a team on Friday and Saturday evenings on a regular basis.
- In the spring of 2006, an exploratory visit was made to Street Pastors in London working with the Ascension Trust, which is committed to establishing Street Pastors across the nation. The Police Sergeant from the CRP accompanied the team who went. As a result it was decided to go ahead later in the year, once recruitment and training could be put in place. It was also decided that in Ipswich, while they would continue to network with Ascension Trust, they would value the flexibility of developing independently, so the emerging team would be called “Town Pastors” rather than “Street Pastors”.
- A strong relationship was growing between what came to be called “The Urban Trinity”: the Police, the Borough Council and the Churches. The Police and the Council produced £14,000 start-up funding for the team, which bought uniforms, and equipment.
- A viable team of Town Pastors was recruited through the churches, and a training programme established. The basic training includes: The values, role and responsibilities of a Town Pastor; Alcohol and Drug Awareness; Conflict Management, and Personal Safety. Follow-on training is also planned, and it is seen as essential for Town Pastors to attend all sessions.
- The need for a building in the town centre to serve as a base, and for the prayer team was envisaged, and initially a caravan was used. At the time of my visit in July 2006, the CYM Centre (Christian Youth Ministries) was providing an excellent base right in the centre of town.
- A Prayer Team was also recruited, with people signing up to pray through the nights the team is out, both at home and in the town centre.
- Ipswich Town Pastors now has its own website: [www.townpastors.org.uk](http://www.townpastors.org.uk) as well being included in the Ipswich in Prayer website.
- How does the Town Pastors Team operate?
  - The Town Pastors’ Scheme is overseen by a group drawn from the churches, and has a part-time Co-ordinator, currently Liz Beaton.
  - Team Members are recruited from the churches, and will then go through a selection process, and if successful, a training programme.
  - Clear guidelines on how the Town Pastor team functions, and application forms for both the Town Pastors, and for the Prayer Team are available on the website.
  - When I visited in July 2006, there were 28 members of the team. Ideally 6 team members go out on Fridays and Saturdays in pairs. Town Pastors are asked to commit to going out at least monthly. At that time, there were only sufficient on the team to cover Friday or Saturday, most weeks.
  - The team has a half-hour briefing by the Duty Sergeant at the Police Station, before going out.
  - The team wear uniforms clearly stating that they are Town Pastors – in the summer a luminous tabard and baseball cap; in the winter a jacket and woolly hat.
  - They carry “Walkie-Talkies” which are linked to the police, and the bouncers of the various Night Clubs.
  - They carry chocolate bars to give out, which have de-fused some situations, and cards which say what Town Pastors are, and give contact details for a range of organisations, as well as taxis, and a Town Pastor Helpline.
  - Town Pastors do not aim to evangelise, but rather to help people, and support the police by doing so. This will include staying with people who are ill, or sobering up while they wait for ambulances, or transport; acting as peace-makers where hostility is

in the early stages etc; sometimes they respond to situations they come across, and at others to a request from the police for help.

- They take breaks at the CYM as needed where coffee and toast are available.
- At the end of the night, the team leader fills in a feedback form on incidents of note, which is valuable from a learning point of view.
- The Prayer Team members pray for selected time periods each night the team is out, and the Town Pastors are in telephone contact with those praying throughout the night as needs arise. Some pray at home, and others at the CYM Centre in the town centre covering the whole period between them.
- On the website feedback is invited, and is both revealing and encouraging. The website also provides opportunity for follow-up through the Hotline Number, and email contact point – see [www.townpastors.org.uk](http://www.townpastors.org.uk)

- A Personal Reflection on a night with Ipswich Town Pastors

- As a visitor I was able to go out with the Town Pastors from 10 pm to midnight, and was happy to join the Prayer Team in the Town Centre from midnight to 4 am. The team is insured, but there is cover for visitors only up to midnight.
- The police briefing at 10 pm was detailed and helpful, with potential trouble spots being identified to the team which was asked to ensure there were people in those places at specific times. I was impressed by the excellent working relationship between the team and the duty Sergeant, and the level of trust that was evident.
- As an observer, I joined a team of two, a man and a woman. Even during the short time I was with them, we saw one or two violent incidents, and it was interesting to hear that as well as the wisdom of mixed gender teams in terms of the people one may encounter, it also provided security, not only for the female team member, but also for the male, who was aware that a man was less likely to be attacked if he had a woman with him.
- As we checked on some of the Night Clubs, as requested, there we received tacit acknowledgement by the Bouncers standing outside the doors, controlling the queues. I gather that initially they had been suspicious of the Town Pastors, but are beginning to accept and respect the team.
- Almost immediately we came across a well-dressed young man who could hardly stand. He was being approached by a group of youngsters who were setting up “a happy clap” (which I learnt meant they would beat him up while one of them filmed him on their mobile phone). Our presence deterred them. We offered to get him a taxi, but he rejected this, and lurched across the street, and through the town. We tracked him, concerned for his safety. He eventually propped himself on a church wall, and got his mobile out – hopefully phoning for a lift. It was good to be there for him, and to pray for him and to have a small part in preventing a nasty incident.
- Another couple intervened where youths were trying to provoke a white youngster, who was somewhat drunk, into racist behaviour. Again, the Town Pastors walked him out of the situation, and got him a taxi.
- Another sat with a young woman who was semi-conscious (cause uncertain - drink?, drugs? illness?) having been requested to go there by the police over the Walkie-Talkie system, thus freeing up a WPC for other situations. The Town Pastors stayed with her until an ambulance arrived.
- During the time I was with the Prayer Team, a request came from those monitoring the town CCTV cameras for someone to go to one of the Night Clubs, where the queue was becoming quite hostile. We prayed that the Lord would breathe His peace into that situation, and were thrilled to hear a further message about five minutes later, that “Fire and Ice” (the Night Club in question) seemed to have calmed down!
- It was a very hot night, and we had all the windows open in the CYM Centre. From there we could hear a background roar, interspersed with the shrieks of young people, and police sirens, as there were quite a few incidents that night which they dealt with directly. As I listened I had a strong sense of Christ striding through the town – through the presence of the Town Pastors – his body in that place. It was also quite noticeable how silent the town went, once the Night Clubs closed.

- It was good to know that while the team is not there to evangelise, there is the possibility of follow-up through the Town Pastor cards that the team carry, and through the website.
- The night was an education to me, both of what the police face across the nation in our towns and cities every Friday and Saturday night, and of how many of our young people today seek gratification through substances and activities that cannot satisfy their underlying need, and in doing so, often put themselves at risk.
- Listening to that roar, I also became aware of Christ, out there right in it, concerned for those who were caught up in it, and with the love and power to set them free, using His people, if they will go with Him.
- Although it is not from Ipswich, I am including a reflection on Street Pastors in Weston-super-Mare, by my sister-in-law, Jenny Simons, as it adds to the picture of what God can achieve through such a venture. A team was set up there in 2006 working under the auspices of Ascension Trust.

### Concerns expressed

- These were primarily regarding the Town Pastors
  - Two large churches in town had shown little interest in the Town Pastors Scheme at the time of my visit, though many other churches were involved.
  - More team members in their twenties/thirties were needed, to relate to this age group on the streets
  - More women were needed on the team

### Key Learning Points

- From "Ipswich in Prayer":
  - The importance and effectiveness of listening to God, and following His leading – in relation to prayer strategy, and in relation to involvement with the community.
  - The flow between churches praying individually for their areas, and "the church in Ipswich" (all denominations) coming together to pray together for an evening.
  - Personal contact by the Prayer Co-ordinator with Church Leaders.
  - The value and use of email, and the website for communicating prayer needs.
- From the Town Pastors:
  - The vital need for prayer back-up specifically for the team.
  - The importance and effectiveness of building and maintaining good working relationships with the Police and Town Council, demonstrated by the way the team was asked to provide additional support on the streets every night during the December 2006 crisis in Ipswich, when the town was facing the serial murder of prostitutes over a 4 -6 week period.
  - The value of the team going out in mixed pairs, both in terms of accessibility to both men and women, and as protection for both male and female team members.

### Update December 2007:

- Prayer Shield and Powersurge: are on hold at present due to staffing shortages.
- Town Pastors: there are now over 35 churches involved, with 50 Town Pastors, and 80 on the Prayer Team. The team is out every Friday and Saturday evening, and on extra nights (A-level results night, Christmas and New Year's Eve etc).
- Release! Ipswich: has plans under way for a proposed residential centre for women recovering from drug and alcohol addiction to provide second stage rehabilitation. It will be called the "Talitha Kum Restoration Centre" see website: [www.releaseipswich.org](http://www.releaseipswich.org)
- Ministers' Prayer Meetings: monthly meetings continue, with a complete morning of prayer from 8.30 am to 12.30 pm now every third month, plus a well-attended weekly meeting on Tuesdays from 7.30 – 8.30 am.
- Heart4Ipswich: is a new "unstructured structure" bringing together all the different Christian initiatives, organisations and churches so that they can speak with a united voice and work with a common purpose for the town.
- Ipswich in Prayer: is launching an initiative called "Adopt a week of prayer" encouraging IIP linked churches to take a week to really pray for the town in 2008.



# First Impressions

*Jenny Simons*

## Street Pastors

First, a confession: as the wife of a retired vicar, I would have to say that I have never been very good at church meetings and my parish leadership skills are fairly non-existent. However, there were always people who did have such gifts who could do a much better job. God has given us all different skills to use in His service. Square pegs should not be put into round holes!

The concept of Street Pastors really grabs me as an 'out there' person – it is also a bit scary! Following the first few weeks of training, the Commissioning Service took place on Saturday October 28th at Emmanuel Church. I think we all found this a really inspiring time. Although the 25 strong team is drawn from lots of different churches and fellowships the Bishop of Bath & Wells, Peter Price, who comes over very much as an evangelist himself gave the address. Apart from encouraging us in the project, he also drew attention to the real benefit of the churches working more closely together in the town. It was good too, to know we have the support of the Mayor, Paula Howell who spoke briefly of her support at the service. As I am not due to go out in a team until two weeks time, I now have time for the nerves to build up.....

.....Sunday November 12th. Got home about 4.45 this morning and woke up around 10:00 – we will be present at the evening service but not the morning! How was our first night out? All I had anticipated and more. The young people had varying ideas of what we were: Street Pasties, God Squad, Meter Readers; Street Pasties probably being the most common! It was far from being a quiet night despite the cold – plenty of fights, a stabbing, drunks, and some tears – but through it all people were expressing appreciation of our presence and thanking us for just being around. Many people passed us by and then turned round to find out who we were and what we were doing. One young man said he felt safer with us there; three young girls (Christians) who had got drunk and felt they had seriously let God down, we were able to pray with. Team members chatted to a couple with a marriage problem; someone on bail for an assault he claimed to be innocent of; we kept an eye on a girl who was having a panic attack outside a club; a chap (and dog) sleeping rough. Five girls fought in a moving car, and one fell out into the gutter in front of us. She could easily have been maimed under the wheels—but told us she only **\*\*!\*!\*** bruised. We met people from Wales, Birmingham, the Midlands... as well as Weston. There were decisions for the team leader to make, such as whether we should continue to talk to the girls who were sobbing their hearts out or go round the corner to where a fight was going on to try and calm things down. A heavy police presence arrived.

We were frequently passing on prayer requests by 2-way radio to the two team members back at Emmanuel and we could not have done what we did without the reassurance that they were there praying at base – the base prayer team is vital to Street Pastors and needs strengthening. I know there were also other people praying at home too – thank you.

Thank you to everyone involved in setting up and running Street Pastors here in Weston-super-Mare and we pray that the project may grow and bring help to people in our town and, above all, glory to our God.

*Jenny Simons*

## SUMMARY: KEY LEARNING POINTS ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION FROM VISITS TO UK TOWNS AND CITIES: 2006

### LUTON - APRIL, MAY 2006

#### Key Learning Points:

- The importance the Luton Prayer Initiative Team put on listening to God, as a team, and in all its prayer activities.
- A deep level of trust was evident among members of the Luton Prayer Initiative Team, as was their commitment to mobilise Christians in Luton to pray for the town, despite the fact that some (?all) were overstretched in terms of time commitment.
- The value of a Worship Co-ordinator on the team, who could bring together Worship Teams with musicians from different churches for large events.
- The need to engage Church Leaders in giving a lead in united prayer for Luton, rather than LPI being seen as a “specialist prayer arm of the church”.
- The need for greater collaboration between Transforming Luton, Churches Together in Luton and Luton Prayer Initiative.

### MANCHESTER - JUNE 2006

#### Key Learning Points

- Leadership
  - A gifted Prayer Leader to oversee the Prayer Strategy is seen as essential.
- Church Leaders
  - Individual contact with Church Leaders was an important factor in gaining interest and ownership of Prayer Network.
  - The Church Leaders’ Gathering was started to enable networking and to provide leaders with support. After various patterns, they now meet monthly from 12.30 -2.00pm and the time includes worship, interviews, updates, prayer in threes and a prompt finish. Providing lunch (rather than BYO) both developed increased attendance and enhanced fellowship.
- Large Prayer Gatherings
  - These developed on a quarterly basis with prayer as the central activity. They are not a celebration with prayer tacked on. There is no big name speaker – but each meeting has a theme. This is well researched, and secular leaders and Christians working in the field are invited. Interviews provide information and prayer needs. Factsheets for prayer are also given out. Starting and finishing promptly is seen as essential.
  - Prayer information: the focus is on the positive of what is happening in the community, rather than the negative, with affirmation of those working in the field seen as key.
  - Worship - musicians are drawn from different churches in order to gain ownership. This is time-intensive, but effective.
  - The style of the gathering is fast-moving, with variety, and light touch leadership.
  - Inclusivity is important: the Core Team have adopted an approach based on “the Radical Middle Ground” (Charismatic Evangelical core values, but inclusive of others in approaches to prayer, tradition etc.) so meetings include all forms of prayer.
  - Inclusivity also means mobilising all Christians to pray, not just intercessors or prayer warriors.
- Leadership of Prayer Network
  - Having a gifted leader to oversee the Prayer Strategy, anointed for this purpose, with understanding of the church, and respect for its many expressions, and able to hold the Prayer Network in the Radical Middle Ground is seen as vital.
  - A gifted Core Group working with the Prayer Leader, researching, planning, and making it happen was also seen as essential. Two vital Core Team values are:
    - relationship: they have grown to love and enjoy one another
    - hearing God: for the themes, and for all they do
- Communication
  - Keeping people in touch through good communication is seen as key, currently using the website, email and multiple texting.

## **LIVERPOOL – JUNE 2006**

### **Key Learning Points**

- The amazing way God can use someone with a heart open to him, who is listening to him and obedient to him.
- The simplicity of some of God's answers, leading to effective prayer and action: eg "Get out on the High Street and see as I see", and DrugsNET.
- Engagement with the Local Authority and Police, as led by God, and the effectiveness of listening to God in "the market-place" and in "the sanctuary".
- The vision for unity among the churches – Dunkirk picture – all sizes sailing together, single purpose, effectively achieved together, under God's protection.
- The mobile School of Prayer – training people to pray – across the churches, and the region.
- The power of the prophetic word, rightly heard and applied.

## **STOKE-ON-TRENT – JUNE 2006**

### **Key Learning Points**

- 1) A change in attitude by local political leaders towards the church in Stoke came about as Church Leaders have engaged with them, especially through the Local Strategic Planning Forum, in order to bring about change in the city. The church has begun to be taken seriously. Relationships have been built, providing a strong basis for co-operation, action and achievement of goals.
- 2) Inclusive monthly Church Leaders' Meetings, plus Away Days, are becoming a safe place for relationship-building, worship and prayer, and mutual learning from each other.
- 3) Monthly Prayer Gatherings for all Christians, have built trust and provided a basis for united action. These are deliberately inclusive with a variety of prayer styles. Prayer based on well-researched Community Services or Projects, presented by those involved (secular and Christian) provides informed prayer, and builds trust with the community.
- 4) Encouraging prayer into positive issues as well as praying protectively over negative issues has also been important. Robert Mountford's historical research into the area has been key in this, and includes positively seeing what God is doing and blessing that.
- 5) Direction-setting for the ongoing journey: both Robert and Lloyd put emphasis on hearing God now through mind and spirit: "What is God doing?" "What is in my heart?" "What am I thinking?"
- 6) Noting the difference between a city-wide vision, and the involvement of local churches in community issues or services in their local area. Place for both, but there is a difference.
- 7) Strong leadership is getting a lot done, and has created structures which are bringing both church leaders and church members together, and creating prayer opportunities that people are taking up, though not all see themselves included in this. What kind of leadership style(s) will most empower people to embrace and own a vision for community transformation, and engage with a strategy to bring it about?

## **IPSWICH – JULY 2006**

### **Key Learning Points**

- From "Ipswich in Prayer":
  - The importance and effectiveness of listening to God, and following His leading – in relation to prayer strategy, and in relation to involvement with the community.
  - The flow between churches praying individually for their areas, and "the church in Ipswich" (all denominations) coming together to pray together for an evening.
  - Personal contact by the Prayer Co-ordinator with Church Leaders.
  - The value and use of email, and the website for communicating prayer needs.
- From the Town Pastors
  - The vital need for prayer back-up specifically for the team.
  - The importance and effectiveness of building and maintaining good working relationships with the Police and Town Council, demonstrated by the way the team was asked to provide additional support on the streets during the December 2006 crisis when the town was facing the serial murder of prostitutes over a 4 -6 week period.
  - The value of the team going out in mixed pairs, both in terms of accessibility to both men and women, and as protection for both male and female team members.

**KEY POINTS: NUTS AND BOLTS CONFERENCE  
NANTWICH – 20 – 21 JUNE, 2007**

**David Muir, Evangelical Alliance**

- Make a difference to the community where I have taken you – bring/find peace there
- Exiles: Jeremiah and Daniel: assumed identity of Babylon – settled down.
- Beware of fruitcakes/banana skins, but if we suspect everyone of this we will do nothing.
- Sexual orientation – include it in a range of social issues Christians are concerned about, rather than making it a main focus
- Prayer dependency essential.

**Kevin Borg – Detective Sergeant – Crime Support, Birmingham**

- Discover Police priorities in your area – Local Policing Plan will tell you – see Library or Website of Local Force
- Speak organizational language
- Offer help in specific areas, rather than: “We want to help”.
- SPOC = Single Point of Contact – identify/appoint a suitable Contact Person

**Debra Green**

- Importance of “the prophetic” in prayer – hearing God’s directions

**Malcolm Duncan, Faithworks**

- Partnership with community eg Vincent Donovan – went to take God to the Masai (Kenya) and found He was already there!
- God is in our community
- Yet God comes with us
- Church’s role: bring Kingdom – Christian’s only people who can. God can do it on his own, but would rather do it through us.
- Jesus washed feet – leads to identity rather than separation. We don’t have the right to tell Britain how to live.
- Church in Britain (apart from Rowan Williams and Cormack Murphy O’Connor) is “raucous in church, has laryngitis in the market-place”.

**Break Out Seminar (with Malcolm Duncan)**

- How achieve unity? Shared projects, based on need (statistics local area: break down, identify need, serve poor). Won’t gain everyone. Start with those you have.
- Don’t look at what you haven’t got, in terms of resources, with a project. Look at what you have and start with that (eg Bank Manager, Accountant – or whatever . . .)
- Start – one thing for one person, but vision = to change the world.

**Networking**

- Meeting up with a Police Officer attending conference on behalf of Surrey Police (Guildford)
- He was able to sound me out about what was happening in Surrey re Community Transformation. Since then Redeeming our Communities Surrey has been launched with the Guildford churches working with the police as the main development so far. He was also able to put me in touch with a Police Officer concerned to see collaboration between the church and police in Hampshire.

**KEY POINTS: GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER – LONDON 2007  
WEST HAM UNITED FOOTBALL STADIUM – 27 MAY, 2007 (PENTECOST)**

- Well-planned Prayer Event with thousands filling three-quarters of seating in the West Ham Football Stadium.
  - Time for real prayer following each presentation
  - Multi-cultural
  - Multi-denominational
  - Reflected many styles of worship
  
- I left feeling that despite rain and a difficult journey
  - It had been good to be there
  - We had prayed and touched God for the nation
  
- Journey – big delays on the tube
  - Fellowship, witness and worship as people realised most of us were heading to the Global Day of Prayer.
  
- Valuable networking with on Sunningdale Station, a group from Sunningdale Parish Church.
  - Still to meet up, but initial enthusiasm for further contact regarding Community Transformation
  
- Global Day of Prayer 2012 – Wembley!

**KEY POINTS: UNLOCKING OUR RESOURCES**  
**ReSource TRAINING DAY – TAUNTON – 12 MAY, 2007**

**Peter Denton, Bishop’s Advisor on Exorcism (London), Christian Healing Mission**

- **Forward Edge of the Battle Area**
  - The Occult
  - How to deal with it
  - Worth looking into Generational Healing further – see “Healing of the Family Tree by Kenneth McCall.
  
- **Forgiveness**
  - Valuable teaching on “What forgiveness is not” and “What forgiveness is”
  - How to receive forgiveness
  - Five “R’s” of forgiveness – Recognise, Take Responsibility, Repent, Renounce, Resist
  - Pray for “enemies” – bless them . . .
  
- **Soldiers of Christ Arise**
  - Spiritual Warfare – how we fight
  - Satan prowling around as a lion - I Peter 5:8 - be alert!
  - Trying to stop the advance of the Kingdom of God
  - In churches – stronger the church, greater the danger
  - In localities – where Gospel is preached
  - In individual active Christians – especially in leadership
  - Church has its head in the sand – we can’t afford to have our head in the sand
  - Old hymns – Church aware of warfare:  
eg. Onward Christian Soldiers; Fight the good fight; Soldiers of Christ arise.
  - Some new songs, but few, reflect this awareness:  
eg. Let God arise; Rejoice, rejoice, Christ is in you.
  
- **Battle Order**

The Enemy



- **Be Protected**
  - No soldier would think of going into a hostile environment, day or night, unprotected.
  - Wear spiritual armour all the time – Ephesians 6:10-20
- **Questions**
  - Session 1: Useful books: “Healing through Deliverance” Peter Horrobin; “Deliverance from Evil Spirits” – A Practical Manual, Francis MacNutt; “Healing” – Revised Version, Francis MacNutt
  - Session 2: External threat – political correctness – deliberate suppression of Christian belief and heritage.
  - Session 3: Territorial spirits:
    - Care re “getting up in the heavenlies” – unknown territory, but
    - Ground level – if you get a shiver – PRAY!
- **Other Resources**
  - Article “ReSource Magazine” Winter 2006 – “Deliverance: Some Questions Answered” by John Woolmer and Alison Morgan.

**KEY POINTS: CONNECTING THE CONNECTORS CONFERENCE  
SWANWICK – 21-23 FEBRUARY, 2007**

**Connecting Heaven and Earth, Lloyd Cooke**

- Linking with community – need to learn different languages to engage with different sectors
- This nation: cities, towns, villages – under siege – Ecclesiastes 9:14-18
  - Wisdom and humility needed – “poor in spirit”;
  - Prophetic words at Trumpet Call Meeting 12 May, 2006: “Fragments” – hold – don’t despise, don’t presume, but
  - Listen, hear, obey, so that He can bring them all together
- Seven Foundational Values of the 2C7 (2 Chronicles 7) North Staffs Ministry:
  1. Intimacy with God is our first calling and priority
  2. Humility, honesty and integrity are vital to the development of Christian character.
  3. Meaningful relationships provide strength, support and accountability.
  4. The kingdom of God impacts every area of personal and corporate life.
  5. Leaders who empower all God’s people are the key to the future.
  6. Arrival at the destination demands commitment in the long term.
  7. God often works outside the parameters of our understanding and experience.

**Connecting Prophetically, Martin Scott**

- John the Baptist went preaching prophetically and the world changed Luke 3:1-3
- Can get it wrong in prophecy → admit it. But often not completely wrong.
- Prayer by itself will not bring change, but it is essential.
  - It changes the spiritual climate
  - We must occupy the ground that is cleared
- Invest in things beyond where you are – think beyond where you are.
- Islam will grow stronger, Christianity will be opposed.
  - Should we protest? Yes
  - Will God help us? Not much.
  - He will strengthen the opposition, or the opposition will grow stronger, and we will grow weaker = God’s purpose.

- **Connecting Prayer, Jane Holloway, World Prayer Centre**

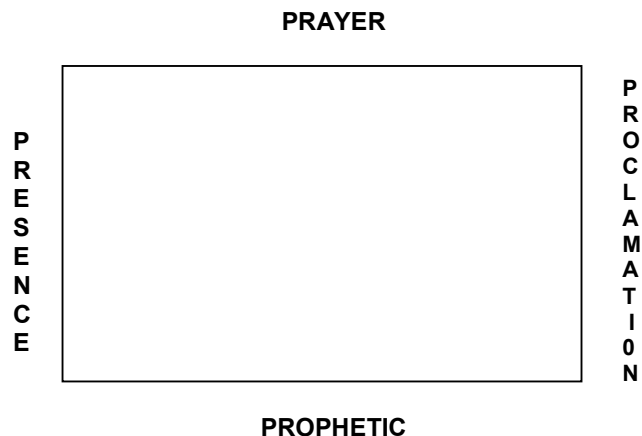
- Prayer like a river: river has different seasons – full flood, drought.
- There are seasons in areas: Spring – pruning; Summer – maximum fruitfulness. Sometimes the Lord says: “Lay it down”.
- God connecting: towns, villages, cities, coastal areas – 24/7 week to pray.
- Going to get darker, but within that: 2000/01 at time when “Transformation” videos released, 10 places in world engaged in Community Transformation. Now, in 2007, there are 500 places documented in the world which are actively working out the principles.

**Connecting Community, Lloyd Cooke and Teams from different towns/cities**

- Faith Audit, Stoke-on-Trent
  - Important to learn language of the city to be able to engage with Local Strategic Partnership
  - Much work in community being done by Faith Groups in isolation
  - Value of Faith Communities work is that it is usually long term
  - Some Faith Communities will never work with Local Authority – suspicious, barriers.
  - Projects:
    - Children and Young People – Training leaders, Peer Leaders, Mentoring
    - Older People – Access to Service Providers for elderly; How to get older people to influence Service Providers. Within 2 months – 3 changes made.

- Opportunities and Initiatives:
  - Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation – need, but not the city’s priority
  - ?Draw Christians together into this field to do something – Christians have a good heart, but are not informed. Need for information to be communicated to wider church = messy.
- Black Country – Walsall, Wolverhampton – members of team
  - Four Local Authorities
  - Faith Audit to discover what was already happening + areas of need
  - Ikea Project for Young Offenders – jobs putting furniture together in Warehouse Bargain Dept – marrying together need and opportunity by churches
  - Prophetic prayer together with spiritual mapping in the area
  - Spiritual resources identified eg Youth
  - Hope 2008 seen as God-appointed initiative to bring Christians together.
- East Anglia – Peter Anderson
  - Prayer Ministry offered applied to communities
  - Spiritual mapping used to discern malaise eg poverty, rat race etc
  - Pray against malaise
  - Declare God’s blessing
- In discussion groups – helpful input from Robert Mountford, City Vision Ministries
  - In well-heeled areas the following might be avenues worth exploring in terms of need/provision:
  - professional counselling
  - debt counselling
  - nursery provision
- **Connecting Leadership, Adrian Lowe, Pastor and former M&S Executive**
- Black Country Leaders’ Network known as “The Net”
- Purpose: To equip/facilitate in order to transform the Black Country
- Target: To reach 1.2 million people for Christ
- Strategy: To fulfil the purpose
- Our Values = Relational Values → We measure ourselves annually
  - We will be honest/transparent
  - We will respect and listen to each other’s viewpoints
  - We will trust each other
  - We will commit to each other with time and energy
  - We will prefer each other
  - We will speak well of each other in public and private
- Functional/Corporate Values – how our network operates
  - Interdependence
  - Involvement
  - Innovation
  - Intentionality
  - Investment – placing high value on investing in people and projects
  - Inspiration – placing high value on the leading of God
- Where are we now?
  - 225 leaders connected
  - 100+ leaders meet bi-monthly, including:
  - Next Generation       80
  - Prayer Leaders       25-60
  - Business +               40

- Lessons
  - Time together
  - Vision – collective sense of seeing something
  - Commitment to strategy
  - Shared values
- Ministry vs Leadership
  - There is a difference, and we need leaders in the church
    - Who will not only be visionary
    - But will also establish the vision
  - Churches tend to be clergy-centric
    - Clergy need to die for leadership to emerge
    - Need to give value back for leaders to emerge (Joshua-style)
- Corporate World – 2 styles of leadership recognised
  - 1. Bison/buffalo style**
    - Power by domination
    - Total reliance on one member
    - Leads to leadership challenge
  - 2. Geese style**
    - Always a lead goose – leads from front
    - Supported by flock – honk for the leader, and for each other
    - Leadership rotates – different birds know terrain better in some areas
    - Collectively fly 25% further than individually
    - If one bird takes ill, another drops down with him, and waits with him to join another migrating flock when it passes over
    - Need to get out of “centric” leadership mindset
      - Joshua mobilised leaders of every tribe to take every city for God
      - Connect all leaders from all walks of life, not just Church leaders
      - Vital to be truly together in relationship – connected.
- When the winds of change blow
  - Some people build windmills
  - Others build walls
  - Lord, help us to build windmills
  - Insecurity – easy to look for something to hide behind
- **Connecting Social Responsibility, Malcolm Duncan, Faithworks**
  - Connected Passions
  - We need each others’ passions
  - Put each passion where it is most important to you



- Five Points which are vital
- Identity of the Church  
John 13:1-17 - Servant
- Equality  
Everyone demanding rights – we must not be like that  
Philippians 2: Jesus – equal with God – did not hang on to this  
Recognise you have rights → give them away  
Make Christian rights clear, but do not withdraw service if not granted.
- Influence  
Main reason Holy Spirit given → acts of service  
Conscience: don't take funding if it has strings attached which compromise your faith.
- Self-celebrating diversity
- Connected Dependency on God for  
How we pray, preach, practise the presence of God, prophesy  
Preaching can be finger-wagging - needs to show the love of God  
He values people
- Connecting for the Future
- Various funding contacts re Transformations
  - Local initiatives, eg Leeds – Christians and non-Christians contribute
  - Farnham Community Christian Trust – seedbed → City-wide Transformation – only lay people in leadership – not church leaders
- Value of working with Local Strategic Partnerships
  - Faithworks can help re how to get involved where there is resistance to Christian involvement
  - Some areas: Faith Groups in main Partnership, elsewhere: separate strand
- Ethical/Moral Standards
- Find a way to stand up for standards without being negative, ie whingeing, angry, critical voice – educate on how to change the angry voice → style
- Mother Theresa: selective on controversial issues fought.  
Positive on non- controversial.
- Presence/Proclamation Emphasis
- Projects including both these emphases are linked by relationship emphasis
- Don't be afraid to “tell your story”

- **Leeds delegate**
- Started “Together for Leeds” → moved on/changed
- Church Leaders: must see our city transformed, our churches grow
- Relational/organic – Leaders’ Prayer Meetings, Prayer Breakfasts
- “Together for Leeds” organisation closed down two years ago
- There is greater “togetherness” now, without gatherings/structures
- The movement is bottoming up from the grassroots eg Young people moved to deprived area, Beeston. Local churches are asking: “How can we support you?” This is real partnership, but it is not structured.
- There is need seen to lay down “the Leaders’ Structure”
- Also a need to get out among the “20's Generation” who won't come to Church Leaders’ Prayer Gatherings
- Our generation wants to “gather”, but “God, how do you want us to connect?”
- **Summary, Martin Scott**
- God is looking for people who will take responsibility
  - Got to plan, but
  - Also lay things down

- **Networking: Guildford, City of the Bride, Stuart Lindsell**
- Following 9/11 in 2001, church leaders in Guildford impacted by book “One Church in the City” by Ian Nicholson
- Week of Prayer for Guildford, at which Martin Scott had a prophetic word
- God wanted to transform Guildford through spheres: Family, Business, Education, Civic Society, Health
- Core leaders: RC, Anglican, New churches, URC, Methodist
- Cities have personalities: Storehouse – give away resources
- Intimacy (Isaiah) Beulah – land married + Rev21,22 → Bride = Guildford
- Relational – Presence of God permeates everywhere
- Primary thrust – being together as believers in spheres – connecting Christian people in the workplace (each church asked to ask members to indicate their sphere with contact details → gatherings in spheres → amazed as they recognised each other → collaborative prayer, witness, support now in spheres across denominational boundaries)
- What would transformation look like – Gatherings in spheres → Prayer → Action
- Clergy happy for “work place” to be the ground
- Surrey: What is the Church doing? Social initiatives presented to Civic Authorities in Guildford Cathedral.

**KEY POINTS: RISING TIDE CONFERENCE  
SALE , (with Liverpool Team) - 6 – 8 JUNE, 2006**

- **Session One, Arnold Muwonge, Nations Discipleship Enterprise, and Uganda**
  - Joshua 3:1-5 Recognise God's times and seasons
  - Do not miss out on what he is doing
  - "You've never been this way before" – different direction
  - Days of superstars are over – God is using ordinary people
  - Street: I want my street changed for God
  - Prophetic words re revival in the UK → prayer momentum is rising
  - Times of prophetic fulfilment – God is trimming us, taking things away
  - He is taking relationships away – their contribution in your life is over
  - He is doing a new thing – bringing new people/things into our lives
  - Wherever you go, look for the people who are anointed to move people in this land
  - Look for them and work with them.
  
- **Session Two, Ken Gott, Pastor Metro Church International, Sunderland**
  - Holy Spirit wants to come and resurrect some dreams
  - Ezekiel 47 – river – different levels
    - Ankles – small activity – small results can keep us from going deeper
    - Good place can keep us from the best
    - We need to swim against the tide – beyond the Church's "acceptable holiness" level
  - 24/7 – It's not about prayer – it's about mission
    - And mission will lead you to the prayer room.
  
- **Session Five, Russ Hughes**
  - Acts 2:14 -21 Pentecost – traditional preach
  - Acts 17: 16 – 23 Athens – spoke to their cultures
  - You can't share the message with first method in this post-modern era, when people pic'n'mix their faith. Second method is needed.
  - There's a world out there looking for Jesus, but they don't want "church" ie organized religion.
  - "Pray" = OK word in the post-modern era – eg girl in call centre, 2 calls re phone not working – (1) Grandad (2) Job, Alpha
  - God uses ordinary people who feel useless
  - Neighbours – invite, but go on their ground.
  
- **Sessions Six and Seven, Rachel Hickson,**
  - Glory-carriers and Water-carriers
  - Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine = position for carrying glory – stand
  - Devil trying to make the church lie down
  - Psalm 3:3 You bestow glory on me and lift up my head.  
You are a shield around me, O Lord.
  - Matt 5:14-16 Salt and light  
Strategy of Satan: keep your head down – don't be seen  
Diseases of church: complacency/ease/political correctness  
When simple people stand and shine – amazing things happen
  - James 4:10 Humble yourselves, and he will lift you up  
Amp Version "And give your life great significance".  
Let God lift you up  
Get rid of false humility
  - 2 Sam 6:12ff David hungry for God's glory/presence back in the city  
Hears rumours of God's blessing – Obed-Edom  
God brings his glory from the house to the city  
We've tried taking shortcuts, bypassing house, straight to the city

- Water-carriers
- John 7:37ff   Whoever believes – mindset change  
Out of him will flow streams of living water  
Need to believe: God and me is enough  
UK cynicism prevalent  
Need to believe: out of me something can flow
- God cannot help people with a victim mentality
  - blaming others for problem, burden
- Just because land is experiencing drought, doesn't mean our lives need to be dry – our Source is God. Britain is a dry place, but our Source is God.
- And God can always make a breakthrough in a dry place
- We are not meant to be sourced/resourced by those around us, but by Jesus
  - Discipline re other sources of support – eg ring/see a friend, shopping, telly – water that does not satisfy
- Counter-cultural people are wet in drought
- Job 14:7-9   Tree cut down will sprout again  
Need faith to smell water again – it will bud, put forth shoots
- I Kings 18:41   Elijah – heard the sound of heavy rain before it came
- John 4 Stand in the streets of your city  
Be a rain-making generation  
We have to be wet, before the nation can become wet  
If we drink from Jesus, we become a water supply, a well.
- What stops flow of water?
- Includes:   Not being generous – stingy with time and money
- Generosity:   Needs to be with money as well as with other things  
Don't know anyone who is stingy who is wet
- Prov 20:4   Sluggard doesn't plough or sow  
Prayer = seed spiritual; Money = seed material
- Psalm 1   Tree planted by water  
Word – faith comes by reading the Word of God  
We need brainwashing with the Word  
But we spend our lives reading other gumph!
- **Session Eight, Sue Sinclair, Watchmen Community Ministries, Liverpool**
  - Workshop on Community Transformation
  - Most – in Report on Visit to Liverpool
  - Church Leaders/Pastors – good at it, but
  - God is looking for men and women to stand in the gap
    - To see the gap
    - To stand in it
    - To pray
- **Session Nine, Enos Nabudere, Pastor from Uganda**
  - We need prophetic ministry to discern what God is saying
- **Session Ten, Arnold Muwonge, Nations Discipleship Enterprise, and Uganda**
  - “Speed can kill – take a break” – Take space to seek God plus
  - When your faith rises, pray that God will protect you and your faith
  - Hunger for souls – fast.
  - Don't tire yourself – “busyness” one of the biggest “demons” in the UK
  - Tired people cannot release the anointing. Anointed, but cannot release it.
  - Don't chase everything
  - Protect the baby (vision)
  - Getting it wrong in prophecy – correct in love
  - Don't put too big a structure on things – ie bigger than baby
  - Allow brokenness in your life, especially in prayer. When God convicts, yield to conviction. This brings your life in line with God, and positions you to receive grace.

**KEY POINTS: TRUMPET CALL – REDEEMING OUR COMMUNITIES LAUNCH  
NEC BIRMINGHAM – 13 MAY, 2006**

**What led to the National Launch of Redeeming our Communities?**

- Effectiveness of the working partnership between the Church in Manchester and the Police in reducing crime through Manchester Prayer Network, CityLinks.
- This led to the formation of Redeeming our Communities, widening the area to North West England.
- ROC's effectiveness led, with encouragement from politicians and the police, to launching it at national level, to make it accessible as a resource for towns and cities across the nation. (See Report on visit to Manchester).
- Drugs and alcohol related crime highest in boys aged 18+ and girls aged 16+
- 80% criminals struggling with literacy (and language)
- 75% of all crime committed by 7% of all criminals
  - Cf [www.copsandrobbers.org.uk](http://www.copsandrobbers.org.uk) and Offenders Anonymous
- Partnership with the Police → Neighbourhood Policing → Team in your Neighbourhood see [www.neighbourhoodpolicing.org.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodpolicing.org.uk) and Leicester Constabulary website
- Pray for police officers and encourage them of “Adoptacop”
- Contact Christian Police Association for more information
- Prayer first – mission second: prayer changes the climate of our society (Andy Hawthorne, The Message Trust)

**The Launch**

- Attended by MPs, Senior Police Officers from participating towns and cities, with input from all, plus local civic dignitaries, and young people helped by and involved with The Message Trust
- Reports by Debra Green, ROC Manchester, Andy Hawthorne, The Message Trust, and The Eden Project, and others – a story of effective partnership and prayer.

**TRUMPET CALL – REDEEMING OUR COMMUNITIES UPDATE  
NEC BIRMINGHAM – 21 OCTOBER, 2006**

**Key issues emerging through Church/Police Partnership, Debra Green, ROC**

- In many areas Christians are working with the police in different ways
- Important to find out what local police priorities are
- Learn to speak “police language” – ie learn how to approach them.
- Redeeming our Communities has Guidelines.
- High percentage of crime is committed by a small group
  - What would make a difference?
  - KINDNESS!
- Holy Spirit can transform
- Agencies can rehabilitate
- Acts of kindness make a difference – to broken people, be they
  - Police Officers
  - Offenders
- Offenders often need whole family management
- Church can engage with an agenda of love – before conversion.

**KEY POINTS: FAITHWORKS CONFERENCE: INTIMACY AND INVOLVEMENT  
EASTBOURNE – 10-12 OCTOBER, 2003**

**Intimacy and Involvement, Steve Chalke**

- Faithworks launched 2002
- Booklet of principles re church's involvement in the community given to Gordon Brown → "Turn ideas into a movement, and I will work with you, to bring churches into the hub of the community".
- If you've got soul – magic: it will work.
- If you've got strategy and organization – it won't live.
- If you've got both: better → best!

**How to Mobilise Volunteers and Mobilise Them (Seminar, Tony Campolo)**

- People in the community take lay people seriously, more than the clergy
- Teach them to renew their strength: Isaiah 40
- To wait upon the Lord – Celtic Christianity: "The thin place" – where the spiritual can invade the mundane → "I listen. He listens".

**Putting the Soul back into Politics, Jim Wallis**

- Faith-based communities:
  - Not the master of the State
  - Not servants of the State
  - But Service Providers – that is how the Government sees us. And partners – ie not having a whole lot dumped on us.
- Don't just plug holes – ie pull bodies out of the river, but go upstream and see who is throwing them in.
- We change the wind – the way people think.

**Faith is our Engine – Spiritual Investment, Jackie Pullinger**

- Galatians 6:9: Patience . . . keep persevering
- "When I prayed in tongues everyday, as well as in English, things happened".

**Finding Direction – How to Focus your Church Outward, John Buckeridge**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <u>Inherited</u>   | <u>Holistic</u>   |
| • Church                                       | Organisation<br>Programmes<br>Control<br>Authority<br>Structures<br>Maintenance  | Organism<br>People<br>Service<br>Spirituality<br>Purposes<br>Mission  |
| • Sharing Faith                                | Formal<br>From above<br>Speaking<br>Church<br>Stressing<br>Difference  | Relational (God already at work in people)<br>Alongside<br>Listening<br>Their territory<br>Expressing<br>Solidarity |
| • Developing a vision for the wider community: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Live locally</li> <li>○ Pick up spiritual vibes – (spiritual warfare – different views)</li> <li>○ Learn local history – resentments, prejudices</li> <li>○ Local Strategic Partnership</li> <li>○ Serve local agendas</li> </ul> |   |
| • Transformational Business Network            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Business people who give skills back to move churches/charities from fundraising to enterprise</li> </ul>   |   |

### **Rebuilding Wasted Lives, Jackie Pullinger**

- Psalm 35:10 Poor and needy on God's Heart
- 2 Peter 3:9 God is patient, wanting everyone to come to repentance
- Jeremiah 22:16 God defends the cause of the poor and needy = "to know Me".
- Do the ordinary as well as the miraculous
- ie "family" rather than "ministry": eg bath children, feed them slowly, hug them
- Words: always be preaching – sometimes with words
- Works: acts of kindness, basic gospel

### **People first – Doing the Best and Getting the Best out of your People (Seminar, Joy Madeiras)**

- People first – determining individual's ministry
  - determining church's identity
- How? Matthew 11:30 "My yoke is easy, my burden is light"
- "Natural rhythms of grace" (The Message)
  - Drive against pressures – drive is hard – what makes life feel a slog?
  - Magnetic draw on wheels – drive is easy – what makes you feel drawn?
- People are their best selves when doing the things that come naturally to them:
  - What are the things I do best?
    - Without thinking too much
    - Which do not stress me/pressurise me
    - Which others come to me for
- A lot of our lives determined by duty: "No-one else is going to do it, so I'd better".
  - The thing that is so distinctive about us gets obliterated.
- Church needs to clarify its identity
  - Mess will result if not – fruit puree rather than fruit salad.

### **PR for Beginners (Seminar, Steve King and Russ Bravo)**

- Much on handout – too full to reproduce, but especially:
  - Build a media-friendly website
    - Include an area for The Press, with press releases and photos
    - Photos with high enough resolution: 300 dpi minimum, Jpeg files

### **Intimacy and Involvement and the Individual, Rob Parsons**

- Take time for yourself – "kick the leaves".
- Henri Nouwen: "Is there a still point in my life?"
- Samson: did not know that the Lord had left him.
- Holy Spirit: we dare not presume upon His presence.
- Pray: eg "pray and walk" more than "pray in your study"

**KEY POINTS: COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION CONSULTATION  
SWANWICK – 25 – 28 NOVEMBER, 2002**

**Your Vision is Too Small, John Guernsey, SOMA Intl, and Woodbridge, Virginia, USA**

- Build a relationship - where there is division
- Ask for help from other churches, and offer it – go with strengths
- Pray over the pain of your community eg Washington sniper - take responsibility if someone is killed
- Commit to your community
  - Jeremiah 29: Build a house, plant a garden
  - Possible to be somewhere a long time and not commit to it
  - Commit to that community for as long as God has called you there.  
Eg John turned down senior posts because he felt God was calling him to Woodbridge for life.  
Sense of blessing and peace once he had settled the issue.

**The Coventry Story, Graham Dow**

- Principles:
  - Going to the people
  - Teamwork with other churches
  - Refreshment: Church Centre available for the community
  - Act of Proclamation – warfare
- Downside:
  - ?Culturally appropriate
  - Gathered homeless
  - Not large numbers of new Christians

**Points from Morning Bible Readings in Ephesians, John Leach**

- Paul dealt with inadequate theology and experience of the Holy Spirit in Ephesus
- He did not pussyfoot around
- How adequately prepared for Community Transformation are the Christians in your area, by the experience of the Holy Spirit?
- Acts 19:13-16: Who's in? Who's out? Churches . . . . .
  - Many churches want to be a resource centre – arrogance
  - Need to be willing to ask for help from others

**Why do we need Community Transformation? Russ Parker, Acorn Christian Foundation**

- Community within the Godhead
- Because God is focussed on the City and on people living together
- 1400 references to “city” in the Bible
- Scripture offers the window of two cities
  - Babylon: dehumanising
  - Jerusalem: belonging to God

**Prayer Time – Listening to God**

- Various words and pictures, including:
  - Community transformation takes a long time
  - Apple pip → tree → fruit
  - I work slowly
  - Stay with the pain of the city
  - Isaiah 6:9-13

**Turning Vision into Reality, Trevor Pearce, SOMA Intl, South Africa**

- Key principles:
  - Persevering leadership
  - Fervent united prayer
  - Social reconciliation
  - Public power encounters
  - Diagnostic research ie spiritual mapping

- Other points:
  - Calling forth intercessors
  - Training intercessors
- Massive Prayer Gatherings:
  - Organisationally – going out of fashion
  - Only the Holy Spirit can move people to come and pray  
eg for first Global Day of Prayer planned for 1 May, 2003
  - In 2002 Prayer Event Africa planned and executed: 23 African countries, 95 cities prayed

### **Community Transformation and Prayer (Workshop), Jane Holloway, Evangelical Alliance**

- 2 Chronicles 7:14: Humble ourselves, pray, seek my face, turn repent
- Patterns of prayer in churches:
  - Prayer-less churches
  - Prayer Ministry churches
  - House of Prayer churches
- Prayer is central – for those who like that sort of thing
- Prayer Group
  - Involve others
  - Need as much preparation as a Sunday Service
  - Provide enough information – not too much, not too little
  - Bring in church teams – life, colour
  - Include answered prayer
- Prayer Walk
  - Include housebound: visualise road or area
- Prayer Driving
  - Divide up parish/area
- Recommended book: “Church on its knees” Jeremy Jennings, HTB, Alpha Pubns

### **Leadership for Transformation, Trevor Pearce, South Africa**

- Leaders are made, rather than born: “I will make you . . . .” Matthew 4:19
- Josiah – 2 Chronicles 34:1 – 35:1.
  - He did what was right 34:2
  - He sought the Lord 34:3
  - He purged Judah 34:3-7
  - He repaired the temple 34:8
  - He heard God’s Word, repented 34:19,27
  - He had a large vision of God
- Marks of leadership
  1. Heart: passion for God and compassion for people
    - Passion for God
    - Personal revival leads to national revival
    - Prayer – reliance on the Holy Spirit
    - Compassion for people – makes passion tangible
    - Must see change on the ground
    - Personal transformation:
      - take Bible seriously
      - take sin seriously
      - when zeal flagging, recognise we need each other
  2. Head: sanctified commonsense
    - Visionary – able to communicate vision
    - Strategic thinker – Nehemiah – do research
    - Goal-oriented
    - Good strategies – cannot replace his plans with ours
  3. Hands: servant spirit
    - Join hands in unity – Psalm 133
    - Special anointing – Exodus 30:22 – special oil

- Life-giving power released – dew of Hermon life-giving
- Empowering style
- Sacrificial giving
- Transformational leaders are not people who work alone
- They are not arrogant, they are humble
- 4. **Holiness:** Character of a leader
  - Generally speaking, clear link between blessing and obedience, curse and sin Deuteronomy 28:1-15
  - Establish a place of grace
  - Solomon, at start of reign - grace for all situations: 2 Chron 6:14ff, 24, 28, 36ff
  - God promises grace: 2 Chronicles 7:12-15 “If his people pray . . .”
  - Repent of personal and national sin
  - Cost involved

## NOTES FOR COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION CONSULTATION DELEGATES

- **The Kingdom Work of the Spirit, Don Brewin, SOMA UK**
- Where the Gospel has spread beyond the church to society around, the trend of increasing violence, family breakdown is challenged
- Many Christian and churches in the UK have experienced renewal, but often this has been inward-looking and stagnates. Churches once vibrant are now half-empty, living on past memories.
- “Transformations”, the first video: why were none of the church leaders in the 4 places shown linked with any of the historic denominations?
- George Otis Jr noted common factors where transformation has begun:
  - Persevering leadership
  - United and persistent prayer among the people
- He also noted several factors which hinder the Gospel taking root in a community:
  - things in the past which have not been dealt with through repentance and forgiveness
  - institutionalised evil
  - the presence of “iniquity”
  - inadequate Christian teaching, especially on discipleship
  - a failure to be good stewards of God’s creation
  - immorality, or any failure on the part of Christian leaders to set an example in marriage and family life
  - inadequate self-worth
  - broken promises
- **Transformation – Turning Vision into Reality, Trevor Pearce, SOMA Intl, South Africa**
- In our favour (in South Africa), many hearts were ready, desiring moral, social and spiritual change
- Good leaders recognise that transformation is a process over time
- The impact of “Transformations” video – 20,000 distributed since 1999 was a factor
- The impact of city-wide prayer meetings, praying all night – was another big factor
- **Your Vision is Too Small, John Guernsey, SOMA Intl, and Woodbridge, Virginia, USA**
- In Woodbridge, addressed racism among pastors and churches. Held a Service of Reconciliation of 5000, but vision was too small
- Pursuing unity, but unity is not the goal. Unity is an essential ingredient, but not the goal.
- George Otis and team came to lead a Community Transformation Conference in Woodbridge, but as the leaders had not caught the vision, there was a small turnout. The effect: freshness and excitement waned.
- Persevered → 24-hour Away Day for Pastors, with the emphasis on depth
- Intercessory Prayer Mission – 115 led into repentance, intercession and spiritual warfare for the community

- **Notes on SOMA International Community Transformation Consultation in Cape Town 30 October – 2 November, 2000**

**David Harper, SOMA International Chairperson**

**Trevor Pearce, Deputy SOMA International Chairperson**

- Prayer and Intercession:
  - Informed and fervent prayer is a key to achieving powerful results.
  - God is calling us to become more committed and passionate in our individual praying
  - He is asking us to pray informed prayers, based on researching our communities
  - He is asking us to raise up an army of intercessors in or cities and churches to pray for spiritual breakthroughs.
- We hear God's invitation and admonition in each area issuing from his mercy, yet "prayer and intercession" is only one area among many where we need to see his power.
- We also hear the urgency of his invitation:  
"Let him who has ears hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church".

## SUMMARY: KEY LEARNING POINTS ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION FROM CONFERENCES ATTENDED: 2002 – 2007

### NUTS AND BOLTS CONFERENCE, NANTWICH, JUNE 2007

- Discover police priorities in your area – local policing plan will tell you.
- Speak the language of the organisation you approach.
- God is in our community already! Yet God comes with us . . . (Malcolm Duncan)
- Church in Britain: raucous in church, laryngitis in the market-place.
  - Sexual orientation – include it in a range of social issues Christians are concerned about, rather than hot-spotting it, which alienates people.
- Importance of “prophetic” in prayer – hearing God’s directions.
- How do we achieve unity between churches?
  - Shared projects – based on need.
  - Don’t look at what you haven’t got resource-wise when setting up a project
  - Look at what you have and start with that (eg Bank Manager, Accountant . . . )
- Networking: valuable contact with Mike Jones, Surrey Police, Guildford.
  - Useful for Mike for information I could give him on Community Transformation in Surrey. Since then “Redeeming our Communities Surrey” has been launched.
  - Mike able to put me in touch with a Surrey Police Officer concerned to make contact with Hampshire Police in the Yateley, Blackwater area.

### GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER, LONDON, MAY 2007

- Time for real prayer following each presentation
- Networking - valuable contact.

### UNLOCKING OUR RESOURCES, TAUNTON, MAY 2007

- Satan prowling around as a lion: 1 Peter 5:8 – be alert!
- Church has its head in the sand – but we can’t afford to.
- Territorial Spirits?
  - Care re “getting up into the heavenlies” – unknown territory, but
  - At ground level – if you get a shiver – PRAY!

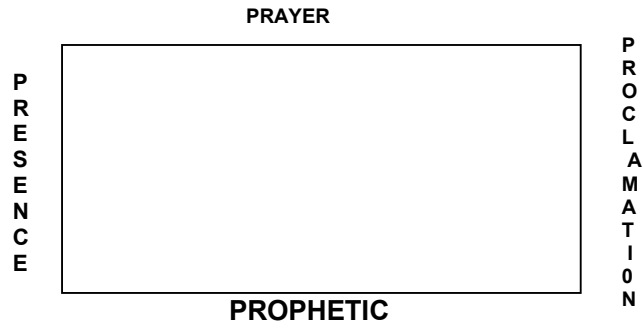
### CONNECTING THE CONNECTORS, SWANWICK, FEBRUARY 2007

- Linking with the community – need to learn different languages to engage with all sectors
- Need for wisdom and humility: Eccl 9:14-18 and cf North Staffs 7 foundational Values
- God works outside the parameters of our understanding and experience
- Prayer by itself will not bring change, but is essential
  - It changes the spiritual climate.
  - We must occupy the ground that is cleared.
- It is going to get darker – opposition will grow stronger, we will grow weaker = God’s purpose.
- Yet, 2000/01, when “Transformations” video appeared, 10 places in the world engaged in Community Transformation.
- In 2007, 500 places in the world documented as experiencing Community Transformation.
- Ministry versus Leadership
- There is a difference, and we need leaders in the church
  - Who will not only be visionary
  - But will also establish the vision
- Churches tend to be clergy-centric
  - Clergy need to die for leadership to emerge
  - Need to give value back for leaders to emerge (Joshua-style)
  -
- Corporate World – 2 styles of leadership recognised
  - 1. Bison/buffalo style**
    - Power by domination
    - Total reliance on one member
    - Leads to leadership challenge

### 3. Geese style

- Always a lead goose – leads from front
- Supported by flock – honk for the leader, and for each other
- Leadership rotates – different birds know terrain better in some areas
- Collectively fly 25% further than individually
- If one bird takes ill, another drops down with him, and waits with him to join another migrating flock when it passes over
- Need to get out of “centric” leadership mindset
  - Joshua mobilised leaders of every tribe to take every city for God
  - Connect all leaders from all walks of life, not just Church leaders
  - Vital to be truly together in relationship – connected.
- When the winds of change blow
  - Some people build windmills
  - Others build walls  
Lord, help us to build windmills
  - Insecurity – easy to look for something to hide behind
- Connected Passions - put each passion where it is most important to you.

Prayer  
Presence  
Proclamation  
Prophetic



- Preaching can be finger-wagging
  - We need to show the love of God – he values people
- Ethical moral standards
  - Find a way to stand up for standards without being negative
  - Educate on how to change the angry, whingeing, critical voice – ie address attitude and style.
- Presence, Proclamation emphasis
  - Projects include both, linked by relationship emphasis
  - Don't be afraid to tell your story to those with whom you build relationships
- Guildford: City of the Bride
  - God wanted to transform Guildford through “spheres” - Family, Business, Education, Civic Society, Health
  - Believers gathered together in “spheres” aware of the presence of God.
  - Clergy happy for workplace to be “the ground”.

### RISING TIDE, SALE, JUNE 2006

- Days of “Super Stars” are over – God is using ordinary people
- 24/7 is not about prayer – it's about mission
- “Pray” is an OK word in post-modern era
- John 7:37 ff “Whoever believes” – mindset change
  - “out of him will flow streams of living water”
  - Need to believe:
    - God and me is enough
    - Out of me something can flow
- Britain is a dry place, but our source is God
  - If we drink from Jesus, we become a water supply, a well.
- We need Prophetic Ministry to discern what God is saying

### **TRUMPET CALL – REDEEMING OUR COMMUNITIES LAUNCH, MAY, OCTOBER 2006**

- Prayer first, Mission second.
  - Prayer changes the climate of our society.
- Partnership with the police – learn their language.

### **FAITHWORKS CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 2003**

- Faith-based communities
  - Not master of the state
  - Not servants of the state
  - But Service Providers – how Government sees us
  - And Partners – ie mutuality, not there “to be dumped on”.
- Don't just plug holes – ie pull bodies out of the river
  - But go upstream and see who is throwing them in
- We change the wind – the way people think.
- Keep persevering – Galatians 6:9 Jackie Pullinger from Hong Kong experience:
  - “When I prayed in tongues every day (as well as in English), things happened”.

### **COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION CONSULTATION, NOVEMBER 2002**

- Commit to your community – Jeremiah 29 – for as long as God has called you there.
- Various words and pictures, including “apple pip → tree → fruit”: Takes a long time!
- Many churches want to be a resource centre = arrogance.
  - We need to be willing to ask for help from other churches.
- Calling forth intercessors involves training intercessors – South Africa
- 2 Chronicles 7: God says: “Humble yourselves, pray, seek my face, turn, repent”.
- Transformational leaders are not people who work alone, they are not arrogant – they are humble.
- George Otis Jr. noted these common factors where transformation has begun:
  - Persevering leadership
  - United and persistent prayer among the people
- God's invitation, issuing from his mercy, yet coming with urgency, is: to pray.
- “Let him who has ears hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church”.

## REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

### CONCLUSION

As I set out on this exploratory journey, I found myself asking three questions: What is Community Transformation? Is it from God? If it is, how do we engage with it effectively?

#### What is the essence of Community Transformation?

For a town or city to be transformed there needs to be united persevering prayer.

- United – this means what I have come to call costly unity. It is costly in the sense that Church leaders need to have a vision for building the church in that town or city (kingdom growth), rather than having the growth of their church as their primary focus (church growth). Church members need to value and relate to those from different churches and backgrounds. This kind of unity does not knock out “distinctiveness”. It does preclude a competitive spirit. It is characterized by humility – 2 Chronicles 7:14 ff and will include repentance. It will involve seeking God together for our community and crying to God to move among us. What is needed has been described as a deep unity of spirit, rather than a “spirit of unity” which can be superficial. One of the proven ways of building unity is through shared projects. Praying together can also dissolve barriers. Yet unity is a means, not an end - the end is that the community be transformed.
- Prayer – needs to be persistent and persevering. Again and again it became clear from the experience of communities where much has happened, that this is a long haul venture. Twenty years was quoted more than once as the time people had been praying before significant change began to happen.
- Prayer – needs to be informed and the discipline of spiritual mapping is helpful here. This can include researching the history of the area for wounds which may still rankle, for problems or needs which need resolution, for spiritual strongholds which may be affecting the present, and also for strengths.
- Prayer - means listening to God, gaining his direction through prophecy or scripture, so that what we do is effective in the community because we do it with his anointing. God’s word to Sue Sinclair in Liverpool, after several years of minimally effective evangelism was: “Get out on the High Street and see what I see . . .” This transformed her approach both to evangelism, and later to praying for the community. Listening to God keeps us dependent on him, it strengthens our trust in him, and keeps us from pride and arrogance.

#### Is the Community Transformation approach effective? Is it from God?

- I think those two questions go together. What I learnt from the people I’ve met and the places I’ve had the privilege to visit is that when people pray for an area, God clears the undergrowth, and once the ground is cleared he can act more effectively:
  - In individuals – so evangelism becomes more effective
  - In communities – transforming areas, issues and attitudes
- Such prayer very often leads to action, as God opens us to not only what he sees, but what he wants to do, often involving his people in that. Some examples show how effective such prayer is:
  - In Liverpool, prayer for Seaforth and Waterloo around statistics of premature death and a low fertility rate led to the appointing of a Community Nursing Team and funding for regeneration in the area.
  - Awareness that Liverpool had been deemed the Drugs Distribution Capital of the UK led to the formation of DrugsNET, a prayer initiative working in partnership with the police to establish prayer targets in order to see drug-related crime eradicated from the community. And it is proving effective.
  - In Manchester, Debra Green formed Prayer Network across Manchester, which met in Prayer Cells, Large Prayer Gatherings as well as Church Leaders Prayer Gatherings. Well-researched community issues were covered in prayer. Relationships with secular authorities were built through this which opened doors to effective service to the community through many major projects and events.
  - In Ipswich, Liz Beaton spent a year listening to God in prayer. From that came

the formation of “Ipswich in Prayer”, a town-wide prayer initiative, and then Ipswich Town Pastors who work with the police at weekends, and were there to support the police in December 2006 when Ipswich faced the serial murder of prostitutes.

- In answer to the second question, I conclude that this approach to Community Transformation is from God, and not just a passing fad. I base this conclusion firstly on the my awareness from scripture that God has our communities on his heart, and wants to bring change, involving his people in that process; and secondly, on the weight of experience of people whom I have met from many towns and cities across the UK where God is bringing change gradually through united persevering prayer.

### **How can the Church engage in Community Transformation effectively?**

- I have learnt that there is no blue-print for community transformation, but there are:
  - principles to follow, and patterns to learn from.
- What are the principles?
  - Costly unity
  - Persevering prayer
  - Listening to God
  - Obedient action
  - Prayer by itself will not bring change but is essential
    - It changes the spiritual climate
    - We must occupy the ground that is cleared
  - Prayer clears obstacles to effective evangelism
  - Prayer removes blockages to a more just society
- What are the patterns:
  - Small prayer groups across town praying for identified target areas (localities, spheres)
  - Regular large prayer gatherings to pray for the town, well-paced and inclusive, well-researched with input from community leaders, both secular and Christian.
  - Regular Church Leaders’ Gatherings for prayer, fellowship and support
  - Training in prayer
    - Involving all Christians, not just “prayer warriors”
  - Prayer walking, Prayer vigils, Prayer visiting, Prayer for specific events etc
  - A “watchman group” for people with prophetic gifting to listen to God for the town

In God’s Word we read:

***“If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land”.***  
**2 Chronicles 7:14**

I believe he is calling us to unity, and to prayer, so that he can move in our land and in our world.

## BOOKS AND RESOURCES ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

### Books:

Ian Cowley 2002	The Transforming Principle	Kingsway Publications,
John Dawson	Taking our Cities for God	Creation House, 1989
Malcolm Duncan	Building a Better World	Continuum, 2006
Debra and Frank Green	City Changing Prayer	Survivor, Kingsway, 2005
Rachel Hickson	Supernatural Communication - The Privilege of Prayer	New Wine Press, 2006
John Leach	Community Transformation (A Beginner's Guide)	Grove Books, 2002
George Otis Jr	Informed Intercession	Renew Books, 1999
Russ Parker	Healing Wounded History	DLT, 2001
Alistair Petrie	Releasing Heaven on Earth	Chose Books, 2000
Martin Scott with Mike Love & Sue Sinclair	Impacting the City	Sovereign World, 2004
Ed Silviso	That None Should Perish	Regal, 1994
Matt Wilson	Eden (Called to the Streets)	Survivor, Kingsway, 2005

### AV Resources, available on DVD:

Transformations	Sentinel, 1999
Transformations II	Sentinel, 2001
The Quickening	Sentinel, 2003
Let the Sea Resound	Sentinel, 2004

These and many other AV resources and books on Community Transformation are available from:

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