

Wednesday 22nd July
Focus: Good News for Torquay project (GNT)

It's Wednesday of the 24/7 Prayer week. Prayer is a powerful weapon. This is an inspiring week and we are excited about spending time waiting for God to speak to us and bringing our prayers before Him.

Our key verse throughout this week is Micah 6:8;

He has showed you, O man & woman, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly & to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

1 Samuel 3:10b-11 says "Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." And the Lord said to Samuel: "See I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle."

Here is the prayer guide for Wednesday. Hopefully you will find it helpful to use as you pray in your hour, focussing today on the Good News for Torquay project (GNT), looking to see how we can be good news to our town.

PAUSE: (5 MINS)

Be Still: *Psalm 37:7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him*

Let's leave the busyness of the everyday, put all our thoughts and cares aside and wait with real anticipation to see what God has to say to his church

REJOICE: (10 MINS)

Psalm 24:

*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;*

² for he founded it on the seas

and established it on the waters.

³ Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD?

Who may stand in his holy place?

⁴ The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,

who does not trust in an idol

or swear by a false god.^[a]

⁵ They will receive blessing from the LORD

and vindication from God their Saviour.

⁶ Such is the generation of those who seek him,

who seek your face, God of Jacob.^{[b][c]}

⁷ *Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.*

⁸ *Who is this King of glory?
The LORD strong and mighty,
the LORD mighty in battle.*

⁹ *Lift up your heads, you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.*

¹⁰ *Who is he, this King of glory?
The LORD Almighty—
he is the King of glory.*

Praise God that we know His saving grace, that we have the hope of eternal life, knowing that Jesus Christ has died to save us from our sins and bring us back into a wonderful relationship with God.

Praise God that we live in such a beautiful part of the country. Praise God for the food on our tables, the clothes in our wardrobes, the roof over our heads, family and friends to support us.

We have so much to thank God for, and today our focus is on those for whom circumstances in life make living each day so very difficult. How can we as a church be helping those in our town who are less fortunate than ourselves?

ASK: (30 MINS)

William and Catherine Booth preached to crowds of people in London in the 1860s. This work led to many being saved and to the founding of The Christian Mission, later renamed The Salvation Army. Catherine Booth once said, "To better the future we must disturb the present." William and Catherine Booth noticed injustice, pain and struggle in the lives of those around them and they took practical action.

[Please find also on the website, a document which explains in full the Good News for Torquay project].

Here, in summary, we are aiming to discern God's will in a project to work out how we as a church in partnership with other churches and organisations in the Bay, encouraging and enabling the project together, can be good news to Torquay. After

interviewing different people across many sectors in society, we have established the needs are varied, and we obviously cannot meet every need:

- **An opportunity** is wide open right now for a professional, collaborative approach. The Administration in the council at the moment is peculiarly open to engage with the church, may not always be. We need to seize this unique moment.
- **Poverty & deprivation** Child poverty, children going without food in school holidays. Provision of food provides opportunity to connect with families at the same time.
- **Housing & homelessness** Housing, not just homelessness, makes people vulnerable. Improve current housing stock in terms of quality, supporting those landlords delivering better practice. Those who need to move from problems such as damp accommodation often don't have the huge deposit needed.
- **Mental health** and individuals' well being – all ages affected.
- **Family issues** – poor value system at home level, guidance needed with parenting, children with wide range of problems, vulnerable children in care, drifting youth.
- The Police & Crime Commissioner regards **pornography** as a root issue in society
- **Start with children.** All issues get linked back to childhood trauma, family breakdown, domestic abuse, teenage pregnancy, children in care.
- **Raise aspiration of children and youth** - aim to bring hope, pride, helping each other.
- **Education & training** is a very important enabler
- **South Devon College** are keen to expand and develop and might want to re-establish a hub in Torquay town centre
- **Age group 16-25s**, seem to be a discrete group where there is little or no aspiration and many of them see little or no opportunity when they leave school.
- **Brain Drain** - Many of those who are academically bright go away and don't come back – talent leaves Torquay
- **Need to help without stigma**, so people will accept help.
- **Aspiration** - lack of aspiration evident all age levels.
- **Life skills** - need to build life skills and confidence
- **Business and Enterprise in the Bay** is one of the keys. Transformation won't come to Torquay without finding ways to get money into the Bay.
- **Need to develop a growing and vibrant economy** – with good jobs and career progression opportunities.
- **Town centre development is essential** - development is needed because of high street problems and empty shops - create employment, activity around the town.
- **Encouraging small businesses** is the best way to build vibrant economy.
- **Elderly population** – isolation, poor transport, bereavement

We would really appreciate your prayers for this project, that we might discern God's will for the way ahead, we cannot do it all! We need to ask God to show us what he would have us do, who we need to be helping and how, and with whom we should be working to make the project the most effective and efficient. Thank you for your prayers. Please do let us know what you feel God is saying.

Prayer: Where is there injustice, pain and struggle where I live? How can I/we speak justice, mercy & humility into my/our town?

God, I ask you to disturb me. Help me not to walk on by or look the other way. Move my heart and inspire my mind – what role can I play in Your plans for these people?

YIELD: (5 MINS)

Prayer: Thank you Jesus, that you promise in Matthew 25, that whatever I do to love and support those struggling under injustice or poverty today, it's like I'm doing it for you.

Matthew 25:40: 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

As we yield or say yes to God, are your ears tingling?

1 Samuel 3:10b-11 Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." And the Lord said to Samuel: "See I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle."

As you finish this time of prayer, remember that God hears all our prayers and longs to give us the desires of our hearts. Leave your prayers at His feet and ask that His will be done.

Be still, breathe deeply and thank God for His presence. Release into His hands all that you have prayed for in this hour.