

24-7 PRAYER WEEK 19-26 July 2020

Saturday to Sunday

❖ SATURDAY EVENING SESSION:

This was a 'bring & share' of any thoughts and words which people had during the week.

- Whilst listening to instrumental music of 'Lord I need You', praying about justice for the town and nations, thinking of people as they went off to sleep that 'we need you'. Strong sense of God's presence. - **Steve**
- The words 'community building' keep coming back. Communities and organisations have pulled together and helped in lockdown, not just Christians – so what can the Church offer that is different – the Gospel! Being compassionate isn't difficult for many people, but actually telling people about Jesus is more of a challenge. - **Becky**
- - Being church, not just doing church.
 - Uniting and meeting under the cross.
 - We need to be reaching out and helping in the community but also telling them about Jesus. - **David**
- Reading **Exodus 23** I had a strong sense to be involved politically and constitutionally – to be there to support where the decisions are being made. Praying for Rising Moments which supports women. - **Valérie**
- 'Walking humbly' – need to be humble enough to give our support for something that might not be our church's doing or a non-Christian organisation. Have grace and humility to know it doesn't have to all come from us. Need to shine Jesus' light into these dark places. - **Mary**
- Work together as Christians, right across the Bay. Street Pastors, Linx, etc – people react differently to groups than if they know you are from 'a church'. - **Andy**
- Pray for Kevin Foster working with different organisations. Do not duplicate. Pray to know the heart of God for the people of Torbay. Not a coincidence that Lee Bray, secretary to Churches Together in Torquay, has been elected onto the Eldership. - **Nigel**
- **John 17** – Jesus prayed for believers, that we would be one with Him so that the world may believe that God sent Him. Break the hardness of our hearts and when we want to build our own empires. Pray for leaders across the Bay to unite. - **Steve**
- 'Break my heart for those things that break Your heart'.
 - **Proverbs 16v3** 'Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed'.
 - 'Blessed are the peacemakers' – pray for peacemakers in Russia and China.
 - Grateful at being accepted onto the Chaplaincy Team of Channingswood Prison. Excited at launch this week, of a new prayer line available to every prisoner and prison staff, with 100,000 bookmarks being handed out. This has been passed by the Minister of Justice. - **Sue**
- Relating to GNT – 'May there be hope in every street' – practical services which would be known and available.
 - Does Brunel Manor fit into any of the Lord's plans?

- **Acts 17** Paul used a pagan sculpture to start his preaching and message. We should be picking up what is already going on, and building on that, rather than starting something new. - **David**
- o Evangelism starts with friendships, and neighbours. - **Sue**
- o **John 15** 'I am the vine, you are the branches'. - **Ruth**

❖ SUNDAY MORNING SESSION:

This morning we looked back over the week of prayer, thanking God for the blessings of the week and for all He had spoken and communicated. Recurring themes and scriptures were highlighted.

As we began, we were shown a glass of water. Water satisfies only when we lift up our glass and drink. This picture was given to someone during the week (see Wednesday's feedback). God is waiting for us to pick up our glass. **Isaiah 44.3-4.**

We read **Psalm 33.6-11** then paused to be still.

Psalm 33.4-5 and **13-19**. On Monday a picture was shared of a big door and when the key was turned in the lock it opened just enough to give a glimpse of all God has in store for us.

We read **Psalm 33.20-22**. We **rejoiced**, praising God, who called the universe into being yet remains closely involved in every aspect of our lives. Taste and see. Living water. A never-failing stream. New mercies every morning. Many answered prayers. God who bends down to listen to us. God who isn't on a Zoom screen but is right here with us!

ASK

We read **Isaiah 59.14-16, 60.1-3** then mentioned recurring themes, leaving room for the Spirit to interpret and time to pray.

1. Moving on from "doing" church to "being" church / leaving some things behind / asking the Holy Spirit to fill our sails.
2. Good News to Torquay as a beacon of justice and mercy / done with all humility / with Upton Vale as a catalyst not a controller / raise people's heads to look up and not down: Prayer for pressed-down people, lifting the lid, Jesus' fingers under the chin gently raising the head; we are your body in Torbay – make us head lifters.

A Celtic Prayer came to mind

Christ before you to show the way

Christ behind you to guard your back

Christ to your left and your right, a constant companion

Christ beneath you to bear you up

Christ above you to lift your head

Christ within and all around you, never faltering, never failing

3. Thanks for local leaders (Kevin Foster, Alison Hernandez, Steve Darling) / for church leaders / working with other churches and key partners (Torquay Council, NHS, Police, South Devon college, 700 charities across Torbay) / that Christians would be placed in positions of key influence: Prayer that God the Holy Spirit would pour out gifts upon his people equipping them and placing them in positions of influence at every level.

4. The opportunities and freedom we have / the persecuted church around the world / a Nigerian pastor, recently martyred, left these words for his widow and nine children: "Don't cry, don't worry, thank God for everything"
5. A prayer that God would open our eyes to see the depth and breadth of need in our community / our young people met on Torre Abbey Meadow - they stood in a circle facing outwards, then walked outwards as they prayed, prophetically taking ground for God
6. God's mountain tops are well worth attaining / see what God is doing ("his own arm worked salvation" **Isaiah 59.16**) and simply join in: Mountains only exist because there are valleys. Prayer of thanks that God meets us in the valleys too, for the principle of Sabbath rest and stopping doing things, for treasures in the darkness.

YIELD

We listened to the song "We long to act justly", based around **Micah 6.8**.

We read **Isaiah 44.3-4**

A Franciscan Benediction to close
May God bless you with discomfort
At easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships
So that you may live deep within your heart.
May God bless you with anger
At injustice, oppression and exploitation of people,
So that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.
May God bless you with tears
To shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,
So that you may reach out your hand to comfort them
And turn their pain into joy.
May God bless you with enough foolishness
To believe that you can make a difference in the world,
So that you can do what others claim cannot be done
To bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

❖ I've had a real sense of the words...

We are a city on a hill, we are the light in the darkness, Jesus living in us can change the world.

They were words from a song during our prayer time Monday and they have been really at the forefront of my mind since. - **Laura**