



LATEST

Priority of Prayer

Prayers of Many

Church Planting

Issue 06 November 2018

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THE POWER OF PRAYER

Dave Holden

I don't think we can ever overestimate the power of prayer either as individuals or when we gather corporately. It should not be something tagged on to our already busy lives or church programmes, but it should be at the very heart of all that we are and all that we do. The early church as recorded in Acts, understood that it was only through prayer that they would see breakthrough; as they proclaimed the gospel and planted churches throughout the Roman world. Indeed, throughout history we have numerous examples of prayer gatherings that resulted in full blown revival and there are nations in the world right now experiencing massive advances in the gospel and we find prayer is right at the centre.

Across the UK Church scene right now one of the most encouraging things happening is a growing desire to pray. New initiatives are springing up everywhere, mobilising the church to pray. Prayer is not a last resort but a wonderful gift from God that should be joyfully embraced. I'm trusting that as a family of churches we, as New Ground, will also become a prayer movement. We have a big vision to plant churches all over Europe and beyond and prayer is key to this.

We gather hundreds of people to pray twice a year in London and recently held the first New Ground Prayer Night, where our churches joined us from their own location via live-stream, resulting in many more hundreds praying together all at the same time.

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Throughout history we have numerous examples of prayer gatherings that resulted in full blown revival and there are nations in the world right now experiencing massive advances in the gospel.

In this Latest magazine, you will find encouragement to pray alongside some great examples of what is happening as a result of prayer. We know that we are only at the beginning of something new and I trust that as you read, you and your churches will be inspired to pray more than ever!

Dave Holden

A PRIORITY OF PRAYER

Terry Virgo

You hardly have to argue for the priority of prayer to an evangelical believer. Most of us have heard sermons, read books on prayer and biographies of praying people and we generally endorse, if not enthuse about its importance.

Sadly, however, this nominal agreement has not led to a strong emphasis on prayer in our churches. Sometimes, in the name of living under grace we have not embraced the necessary discipline to develop a prayer life and prove its actual pragmatic worth either individually, or as praying churches.

Speaking to the students at the New Ground Academy I mentioned that when I used to lead the Newfrontiers church in Brighton I used to pray privately as much for the church prayer meeting as I did for the Sunday services. When queried about this I replied that for me the regular church prayer meeting was no formality but a phenomenal key to church blessing.

Starting the church, we had a monthly Sunday evening prayer meeting, but I wanted one more frequently and I wanted it to precede the Sunday services. As our appetite for prayer grew, I changed

it to a weekly Saturday meeting at eight in the morning where we battled for our Sunday meetings, our church life and our impact in the area. They became exciting times enthusiastically attended.

We heard through prophecy that the substantial financial challenge associated with our buying and refurbishing a property would provide the anvil on which God would hammer out our faith. And it did!

We arranged special gift days three times a year. Initially the needs of our small church were in the region of £20,000 each time. We prayed and regularly hit the target. Gradually we grew and our needs multiplied to £100,000 each time and on two occasions £200,000. Learning to pray together and discern if faith was growing in the meeting was an exciting experience. I would ask, "Do we have it yet?" We prayed until we could close with singing and a time of praise.

Corporate prayer was an event, an exciting adventure. Corporate prayer in the New Testament was never a dull routine. Prayer meetings in the book of Acts resulted in fire falling from heaven, (Acts 2), disciples being freshly emboldened (Acts 4), prison

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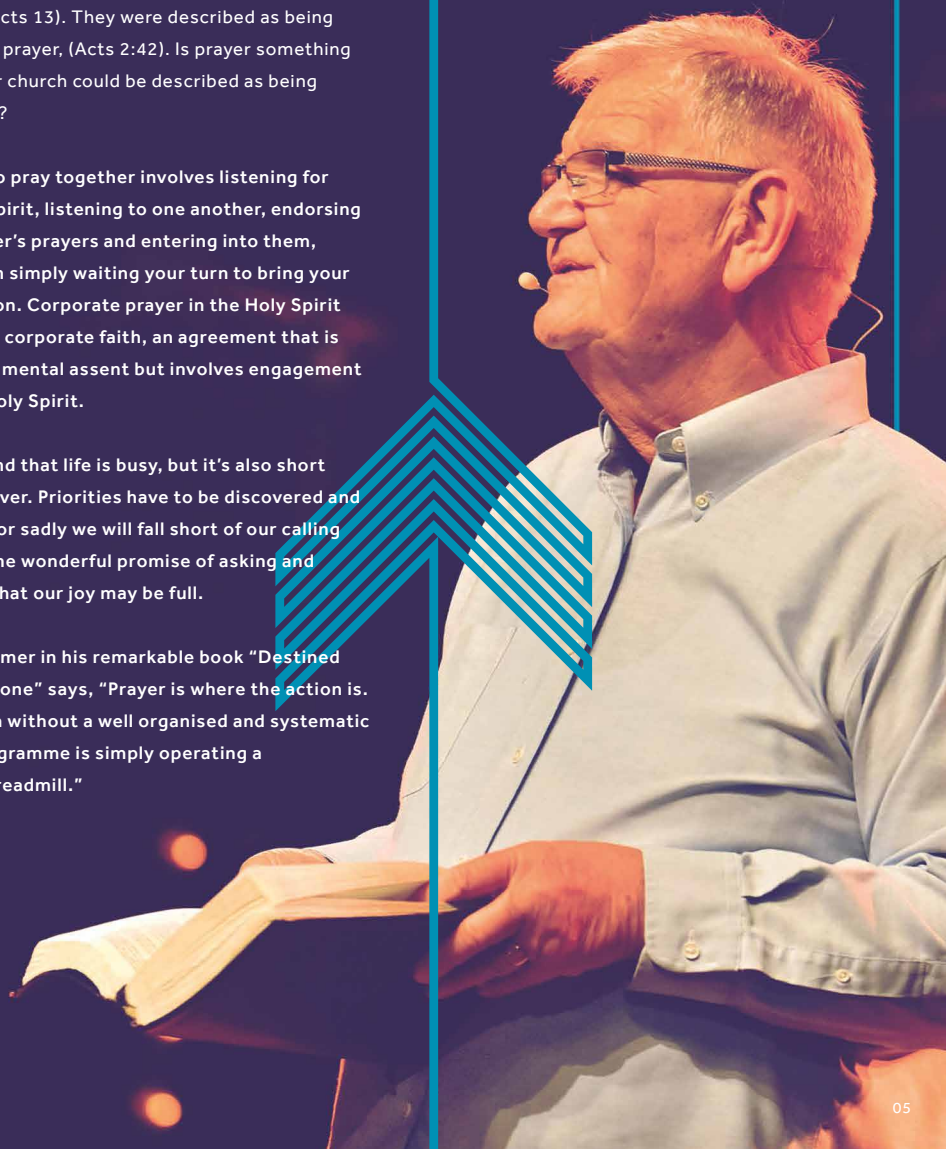
Any church without a well
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doors opening (Acts 12), apostles being sent on mission, (Acts 13). They were described as being devoted to prayer, (Acts 2:42). Is prayer something you or your church could be described as being devoted to?

Learning to pray together involves listening for the Holy Spirit, listening to one another, endorsing one another's prayers and entering into them, rather than simply waiting your turn to bring your contribution. Corporate prayer in the Holy Spirit can lead to corporate faith, an agreement that is not simply mental assent but involves engagement with the Holy Spirit.

I understand that life is busy, but it's also short and soon over. Priorities have to be discovered and embraced or sadly we will fall short of our calling and miss the wonderful promise of asking and receiving that our joy may be full.

Paul Billheimer in his remarkable book "Destined for the Throne" says, "Prayer is where the action is. Any church without a well organised and systematic prayer programme is simply operating a religious treadmill."



THE PRAYERS OF MANY

Mike Betts (Relational Mission)

God is doing something in our day. Churches around the world are discovering a renewed hunger for what Jonathan Edwards described as “explicit agreement and visible union of God’s people in extraordinary prayer”. We at Relational Mission have for the last few years felt God calling us to really prioritise our times of corporate prayer in preparation for a move of God across our world.

Three times a year we gather in hubs across Europe, Africa and North America for half-nights of all-age corporate prayer. We call these nights ENOUGH (learn more at prayersofmany.org).

WHY IS IT CALLED ENOUGH?

There is an urgent need for us to put a stake in the ground and say, ‘That’s it! We’ve had ENOUGH of the poverty, dysfunction and pain in our broken world.’ But, we also need to grasp that God is ENOUGH, that

he is sufficient and we do not need to go further than him to bring order and restoration to that world.

When God stirs his people to pray in large numbers, consistently for a period of time, it is always because he is preparing something that is going to come as a result of it. And he is also preparing us.

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Prayer does something in us and our churches. In order to pray over the long haul, we need persistence, and that is not a common trait in our meals-in-minutes, same-day-delivery, instant-results world.

To learn this persistence we need to get to know the character and nature of God; the promises he has made. Jonathan Edwards said, ‘That which God abundantly makes the subject of his promises, God’s people should make abundantly the subject of their prayers’. God is training us, making us confident





in our belief that what he has said in his Word is unshakeable. God is teaching us to hold onto him for answers, letting go of our expectations for the speed of his response and never letting go of his promises.

We are seeing God change us, change our hearts, change our attitude to prayer, and change our churches. Slowly but surely, we are becoming people who are not going anywhere until we see God fulfil his Word.

GLOBAL IMPACT

In the 18th century, Jonathan Edwards gathered thousands of people in years of extraordinary prayer using a model very similar to ENOUGH. The fruit of this persistent, corporate prayer was revival, and a missionary thrust across the world.

Prayer is the fuel that makes the unmanageable attainable. In 2 Corinthians 1:11 Paul emphasises that the prayers of many obtained what otherwise may not have been given.

Our world today is in crisis in so many areas. As we join together the persistent prayers of many – crying out to God to heal our hearts, our communities and our nations – we can pray with confidence that 'he who has promised is faithful' (Hebrews 10:23).



PRAYERSOFMANY.ORG



CLOSING THE DOOR

Henk Kersten (New Ground Core Team)

As a young boy I grew up in a Roman Catholic environment, where nuns taught us in school, they were the nurses at hospitals and the whole class would go to confession, seeing the priest a couple of mornings each week before attending school. Depending on the 'seriousness' of my confession(s), I was then told to recite a couple of 'Our Fathers' and some 'hail Mary's'. I had no revelation of Jesus as my Saviour, nor of God's desire for relationship with us as the priesthood of believers, rather than just a priest, nor did I have any idea of what prayer was all about.

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Closing the door helps
us to take time to listen and to
become better at listening and
not just in asking.

When Jesus met with me and changed my life I started to understand that prayer has nothing to do with religion and everything to do with relating. It was about getting to know Him better, getting to



know myself better and my real need for His Presence in my life.

When the disciples ask Jesus: "Lord, teach us to pray...", He introduces the 'Our Father' prayer, a great model and guideline for our prayer-life. Like the disciples, I need Jesus and the help of the Holy Spirit in my prayers: "Please Jesus teach me and help me to pray!" Teaching suggests learning; you practice, grow and learn. It's so encouraging to know that it's a process that can get better!

In Matthew 6:6 Jesus encourages us to go 'into our room...and pray'. It's an invitation to a very personal and intimate time, where we 'close the door' behind us and spend time with Him.

It's not for us to stay there, but to start there. We cannot have a public life without a private one.

'Closing the door' helps us to take time to listen and to become better at listening and not just in asking. In the original translation the word 'Father' is the first word here. It's about 'He' not 'me', about what He desires and not what we request - what a great way to start!



Our hope is that our loved ones, those closest to us, within our own families would know that prayer is an important part of our lives, praying for them and with them.

It is pure joy to tell Father all that is in our heart, but the depth of our prayers and knowing Him more intimately is something that we get to push through over persistent time spent with Him.

"Lord will you continue teaching us to pray and to see many of our prayers answered? Would you strengthen our hearts in love and increase our desire for Your presence in our lives and in our churches? We pray that we would see the emerging of many churches in the UK, Europe and beyond, filled with praying saints who are intimate followers of Jesus. For the sake of Your Kingdom and glory, now and forever, Amen!"

PRAYER NIGHT

PRAYER NIGHT DATES

— 2019 —

30
JANUARY

01
MAY

18
SEPTEMBER

newgroundchurches.org



PLANTING CHURCHES WEST LoTHIAN

Dave Hill (King's Church)

This September, we celebrated our one-year anniversary of weekly meetings in West Lothian and have a growing core of around 50 people including children! God has added to our number in a steady way and some of these were not previously attending church.



of language hurdles Jessica has been eagerly devouring our teaching on the grace of God.

Liz too is an extremely well-connected local who had been out of church for many years, but had been praying for a lively, Spirit-filled church to move into the area. We now have a mid-week group based in her home.

We baptised five people in our garden in the summer, which was an unexpected highlight. Sue, a 'Geordie' lady in her fifties, was not a believer but attended her daughter, Zoe's church in Belfast at the beginning of the year where she made a profession of faith; Zoe had only become a believer a few months earlier. We were able to baptise both of them, and heard Sue share about their amazing reconciliation with each other after years of estrangement. Sue is now attending King's regularly.

A lovely South Korean couple, called Jessica and Josef, first met us when their young daughter wandered into our venue needing the loo, in spite

We're also working hard to connect with our local community; arranging a fun-day, a Bingo night, a local park clean-up and serving at parkrun have all featured in this year's calendar.

We have faced some challenges regarding health, particularly Daniel, a toddler with a hip infection that has affected his walking, however he is now much improved and we are believing that he will make a full recovery.

We're enjoying the adventure, and are amazed by God's provision, so grateful that He's gone before us! Please pray with us that we would see more locals come to faith and lives changed by the love of Christ.





PLANTING CHURCHES BERLIN

Peter Benton

It was in April 2018 that we parachuted into Berlin and we've loved getting to know this influential, European city. This last year has been about prayer and preparation as we've been adjusting to our new and exciting life. After a season of visiting churches over the summer, we've started meeting together in homes. In 2019, as new team members arrive we'll be going through the book of Acts together and learning to live like the early church here in Berlin.

We've learnt lots about prayer in this season of preparation, especially as we've faced some challenges with living situations and recruiting team. While feeling confused about setbacks, we've clearly sensed God inviting us close in prayer. Like Joshua before the walls of Jericho, we've been worshipping

and praying for walls to come crashing down. Jericho was the first fortified city to be taken in Canaan. God had promised the land and the city as a possession "See, I have given Jericho into your hands", yet there was still a battle to be won.

A friend encouraged us to see setbacks partly as a training opportunity for future victories; learning to persevere and win battles in prayer and growing in faith for breakthrough in salvation and healings. We made a list of everything we wanted in our new home and God has miraculously provided it all. We have a similar specific prayer list for a church planting team, of which we are halfway to our prayer goal. Praise God for lessons learned and answered prayer. These battles have felt like significant first victories since arriving in this new land. We are so excited for all that God is doing and is going to do as we share the gospel with neighbours and colleagues and gather as a church plant.

It was great to feature in the New Ground Prayer Night in September 2018, and to host a prayer day here in Berlin with an army of 30 friends and church planters seeking God. Please continue to pray for hundreds and thousands of Berliners to be saved as we start a city impacting church that loves God and loves Berliners.



berlinadventure.tv



PLANTING CHURCHES BRUSSELS

Marinus van de Lagemaat

In the spring of 2017, we started to gather as a church plant in our living room. We now meet in a café in the city centre of Brussels and the journey has been fun, crazy, hectic, and exciting as we've jumped in to this adventure of church planting!



perspective on things. Either way, we pray that His will be done and for His Kingdom to come in our lives, church and city!

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Prayer puts things

into motion, changes things

and stirs faith.

As a church, we are finding out what it means to work together, to be a family together, to be church together and to love the people in Brussels together. So, we've spent a lot of time in conversation discussing ideas and thoughts of how we can do this.

What we have since seen and realised is that prayer is so much more important. Prayer puts things into motion, changes things and stirs faith. With prayer, we focus on Him, the Almighty One, rather than on ourselves, the not-so mighty ones. With prayer, we give room for the presence of God to be involved in every area or situation of our lives. Yes, God is able to change situations, but He's also able to change our

So often we can find ourselves trying to work it all out on our own, while the answer is to pray. Do we ask God for help when we have run out of options? Or do we allow God to lead us in His ways from the beginning. It requires faith to allow God to lead, and it requires prayer to open our hearts and ears to hear His gentle words.

God, help us to be a praying church!





PLANTING CHURCHES MAASTRICHT

Maarten & Lise de Lange



It was about two years ago that we strongly felt God speaking to us about planting a new church in Maastricht. We took a big leap of faith as we started off with only four people. We spent the first year praying, waiting and trusting God, knowing that He is in control of it all. As we moved forward in faith and expectation, we knew that God was able to do something extraordinary in Maastricht. From September 2017, we started meeting in the living room of our new home and immediately people joined us and a group began to form. This started a great time of building foundations and strong relationships.

Meanwhile there was an 'unreachable' property right in the centre of Maastricht, which had been on our hearts for a long time. It is a well-known place in Maastricht and easy to find. We got in contact with the owner, but the door seemed to be closed. As

God had been speaking to us about being a church in the city centre, we kept pressing in, with people around us standing with us in faith and prayer. Eventually, when we didn't expect it, the door miraculously opened and we had our first official meeting at "La Bonbonnière" on the 2 September 2018. We were overwhelmed by the amount of new people who joined us, we had doubled in size! We also started an Alpha Course not knowing who would turn up, but we wanted to reach out and see people saved. God surprised us again with eight non-believers open to hear about the gospel.

We can only stand amazed and testify to God's merciful hand upon us. We know He has a great future prepared for this church plant and the wonderful people of Maastricht that we so love.

For now, we are simply overwhelmed by His goodness.



HOW CAN WE PRAY?

Dave Holden

People often ask me “how can we pray for you or for New Ground?” I love it when we are equipped to pray specifically, so I’d love to take this opportunity to share with you some of the key areas that we are praying for at the moment, and to invite you to join us, both in your personal and corporate prayer times.

DOUBLE IT

At present there are approximately 50 churches in a number of different nations within New Ground. We’re in faith for that number to double over the next few years, to be a family of 100 churches in even more nations. I appreciate it’s not all about numbers but having this as a goal has really focussed my praying recently – can I invite you to join me in praying for this.

PLANTING CHURCHES

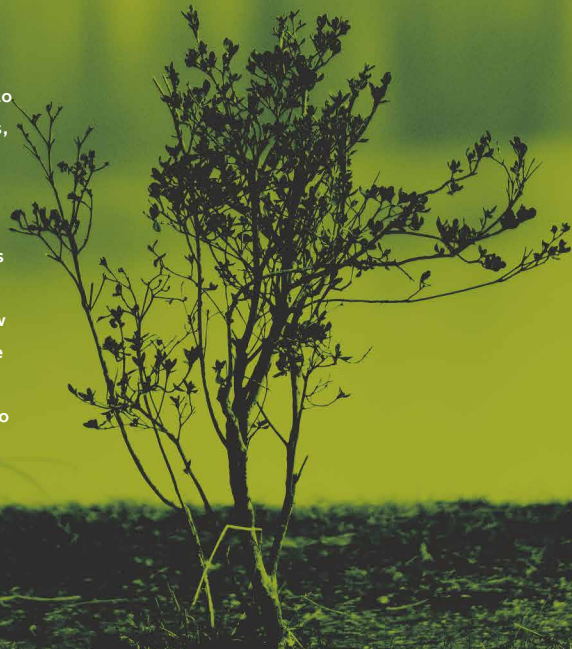
There are two ways that we see churches added into our wider family. One is when established churches, through relationship, agree to join New Ground. The other is through church planting. As a Core team we are constantly thinking and praying for more churches to be planted. There are many cities throughout Europe where we would love to go; we are praying for specific places that God would show us to plant. In order for this to happen, we know we need to raise up numerous gifted leaders as well as mobilising many individuals and families ready to go

- Maybe you are one of them?

We’re also praying for more church plants throughout the UK and specifically in London and across the north of England. Please pray also for Scotland where there is a great need for churches to be planted across many of its towns and cities.

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There are many cities throughout Europe where we would love to go; we are praying for specific places that God would show us to plant.



REACHING NATIONS

New Ground is such a good name for us as it represents our desire to continuously pioneer, by literally taking new ground. It's wonderful that we are working into several nations in Europe already, but we believe we should be working into many more. Is there a specific nation that you are praying for: across Scandinavia or The Balkans, in Spain, Portugal or Germany? Do let us know if you are – send us an email to

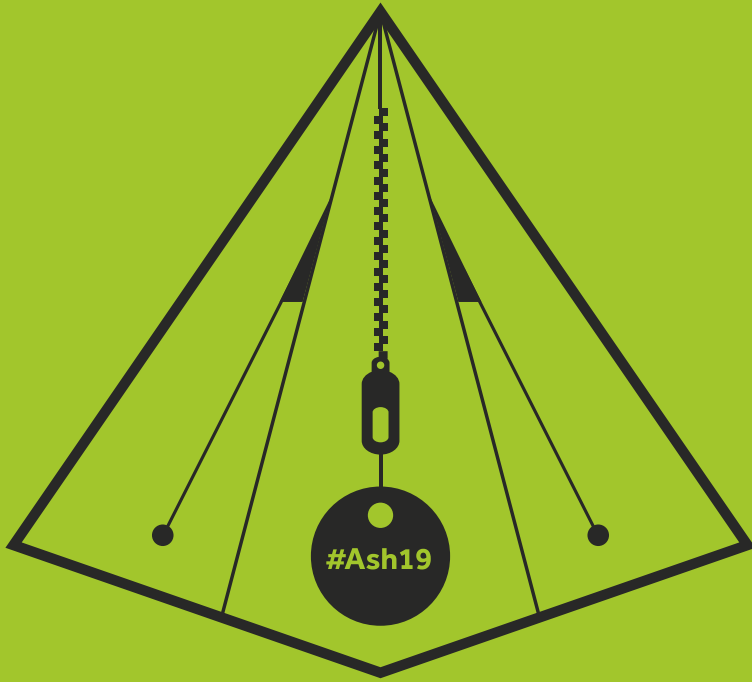
churchplanting@newgroundchurches.org

Also - we're not praying for just one church in each nation, but for 'families of churches' to be established within these nations who will plant churches together. This already exists both in The Netherlands and in France. It's so exciting to see the potential of growth when this happens. We have ten established churches in France who are already planning and praying for five new church plants. So why not the same for Italy, Austria or Poland? Let's pray for remarkable and miraculous breakthrough.

A FINAL REQUEST

We long to raise up a new generation that carry the DNA of New Ground way beyond those of us presently leading. We're praying that through Impact, the Academy, our Connect conference, our prayer gatherings and Ashburnham in August 2019, we will see a generation emerge that will GO! It's already happening now let's pray for this number to grow and to keep growing.

These four prayer requests involve all of us. Some of us will have the joy of seeing these prayers answered and some of us will be the answers to these prayers as we respond and go. Has God forgotten Europe? Absolutely not! Can we make a difference? Absolutely Yes! Whoever we are and wherever we live, prayer has the power to make all of this happen. Why wait? Start praying today.



23–26 August 2019

BOOK NOW

newgroundchurches.org/ashburnham

Raising Leaders. Impacting Communities. Planting Churches. Reaching Nations

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