

News from the Office: Vision

At our recent Board meeting we agreed two simple changes to the Vision statement, it now reads:

The Daylight Vision: To Glorify God and enjoy Him by prayerfully proclaiming the gospel of His grace in every UK prison and to ex-offenders and their families.

We have added the words “enjoy Him”, from the Westminster Shorter Catechism. This is something I have found repeatedly over the last six months; Christ’s joy is evident in the hearts and lives of those who serve Daylight on the front line, and it is growing in others. We have also removed the phrase “regionally directed”; this recognises a shift in focus to increase the number of Daylight Prison Chaplains and for them to have smaller geographical areas of responsibility than Regional Directors.

Usually we have the most influence for the gospel where we have a ‘Volunteer Chaplain’ on the chaplaincy team in a prison. I believe God is calling us to aim for this ‘Gold’; without giving up on the other opportunities of Letter Writing, Bible Studies, and Sunday Services.

A week before the board meeting God led me to visit and pray at Hanham Mount. That is a green space in an otherwise built-up area, where to this day it is remembered that Charles Wesley joined the Field Preachers. The prayer God gave was, “LORD, give us the Prisons and use us in such a way that Daylight Prison Chaplains will be remembered as ‘the Prison Preachers’”.

There are a number of people expressing the desire to serve and opportunities opening up in prisons please pray that we might connect the right people to the right places; and that as we do God will choose to lead some of these on to be ‘the Prison Preachers’.

If you would like to support Daylight’s work financially, one-off or regular gifts can be made via the ‘Donate’ tab on our website daylightcpt.org, or call 01245 252735 to make gifts by phone. Cheques made payable to Daylight Christian Prison Trust can be sent to our office address below, and if you would like a Gift Aid or Standing Order Form, please let us know.

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Daylight Newsletter November 2023

This month, we want to share two recent reports from volunteers which we hope will give an insight into prison life, as well as encouraging you in prayer...

One Daylight Chaplain writes, “One of the interesting things about prison life is that Christians and Muslims end up living side by side. They share the same roof, exercise yard, workplaces, and servery. They eat (mostly) the same food, they see each other day in day out, and consequently, they get to form their own assessment of the genuineness of each other’s faith.

This week, one of my Christian men told me he had a Muslim friend sharing with him in deep distress that he had lost touch with a close relative, not having seen or heard from them for six months. My Christian brother responded that there was nothing he could do except pray, and proceeded to pray earnestly, with tears, for his friend.

The following day his Muslim friend was so excited to report that he had just found on his prison laptop that he now has a visit booked with the lost relative! He is in awe of the power of this Christian man’s prayer!

From another prison, our volunteer shares a conversation between two prisoners at a recent Bible study:

Alex said, “I remembered that verse you told me about the other week, Ian. I was out on the yard, and someone was trying to get me involved in slagging off another prisoner, and I remembered, ‘Be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger’, like you said, so I said nothing.

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Norwich Prayer Meeting (Norfolk) – Give thanks for the opportunity for Jon to lead a Daylight Prayer Meeting and share something about his prison chaplaincy work with Norwich Evangelical Free Church on Wednesday 15th November at 7:30pm. Please pray that this will be an encouragement to the church there, and if you are in the area, and would like to come along, you would be very welcome.

Overcrowding – As you may have seen in the news over recent weeks, prisons in England and Wales are currently struggling for space, with many of them overcrowded. This places additional pressure on prison staff who are often already overstretched, so please pray for them, and for prison governors and those in government who have the responsibility of overseeing the prison system. Pray too that this will not lead to unrest in prisons, and for a calm atmosphere to be maintained.

Supporters – Give thanks that an encouraging brief deputation during a morning service at one church in Essex resulted in five people offering to support the ministry in a variety of ways. We are grateful to God for everyone who supports the work in whatever way. Please pray that God will continue to stir up supporters, new and old, to match the vision that He is giving.

HMP Wakefield (West Yorkshire) – Praise God that twelve men attended the first evening Prayer & Fellowship session here. Please pray that they will come back in future months, and that others will be keen to begin attending as well.

HMP Wealstun (West Yorkshire) – Give thanks for the opportunity to begin a new *Hope Explored* course here at the end of November. Please pray that a good number will attend, and that God will be close to those who are leading.

West Yorkshire Prayer & Support Group – Please pray for the chaplaincy teams in all the nearby prisons as they begin to make plans for the different Christmas events and services, and for prisoners who have recently left the prisons, that they will receive strong and useful support that will help them not to reoffend.

The bloke got really funny with me coz he thought I was blanking him, but I just told him I'd got nothing against the other bloke. I thought I was going to get into fisticuffs coz he didn't like it one bit, telling me that since I'd come off drugs I'd got really weird."

Our volunteer ends by commenting, "Praise God that Alex remembered the verse, put it into practice, and saw the benefit. Rather wonderful I thought!"

November Prayer Points

HMP Birmingham (West Midlands) – Give thanks that the men here have enjoyed the recent series of studies in Philipians. Please pray that as they move on to look at The Sermon on the Mount in coming weeks, this will also be a blessing to them.

IPP Sentences – Please pray for prisoners serving IPP (Indeterminate for Public Protection) Sentences; these were abolished in 2012, but not for existing prisoners, so we often come into contact with men serving out these sentences. With no release date to work towards, many of them struggle with a feeling of hopelessness over seeing no end to their incarceration. Pray that our chaplains will be given wisdom in knowing how best to support them.

HMP Leeds (West Yorkshire) – Give thanks for the nine men who have been attending the monthly Bible studies here, and for an invitation from the chaplain to run these each week. Please pray for more people to join the team, so that it might be possible to take up this opportunity to begin running these studies more regularly in the New Year.

HMP New Hall (West Yorkshire) – Give thanks for the fourteen women who attended the last Bible study session here; for their enthusiasm, and for consistent attendance month by month.

Give thanks too that the chaplaincy team here have asked for sixty Bibles, and sixty New Testaments & Psalms, exemplifying the desire that many of the women have to read God's Word.

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