

# From Prayer to Evangelism **Vision4Life**

Transformed through prayer

## some ideas

### AIM

In this material you will find some ideas you might like to use to make the link between prayer year and evangelism year. The material is designed to be used during the month of November 2010 but could be used any time.

### INTRODUCTION

We are now nearing the end of vision4life Prayer Year. We hope that it has been a good year for you. As we all prepare to move onto Evangelism Year we would like to encourage all signed-up churches to think of a way of marking this transition from prayer to evangelism with a prayer based event. Our endeavours to be 'transformed for evangelism' will need to be undergirded by prayer. This is a chance to get that process off to a flying start.

### Let me tell you

We will begin with some feedback from around the country that we have received during prayer year.

### From the South

The first hour of the prayer vigil took the usual weekly format of silent prayer and then the worship using the Lord's Prayer as an outline. A pew sheet with suggested topics for prayer for both the URC and the local community was made available. This included the Vision4Life Prayer and a prayer for guidance and the Retreat Association prayer for Stillness. Suitable Bible readings were read at intervals followed by periods of silent prayer and reflection. These readings also appeared on the sheet. A table displayed prayer material downloaded from Vision4Life website, together with books about prayer from our church library. People were invited to come and go quietly at will through the door which connected the church to the coffee area. We were surprised how long people stayed and there was a wonderful sense of peace in the church. Elders took the pew sheets to our housebound members and those unable to be present because of other commitments, took the sheet and used them privately. The feedback was very positive and we hope to do this again in October.

### From the East

We had put out a variety of resources for private prayer around the room and also copies of the Lent and Easter prayer stations sheet cut and pasted so the details for the 6 stations fitted on one A4 sheet. People could take a copy as they entered the Sanctuary. The sanctuary was in absolute silence for the whole hour as individuals worked through the suggested Bible readings, meditating upon them using the guidance given. When we evaluated the experience in our Elders' Meeting we all felt that it was so valuable that we propose to repeat it at the same time next year-it was a marvellous start to the Easter weekend.

### From the West

The church was open on Holy Saturday as a space for quiet reflection and prayer from 1-3pm. In the newly refurbished sanctuary five prayer stations were set up, centring on the emotions that surround death: Grief, Guilt, Fear, Gathering and Blessing. At each, individuals were able to spend time to give thanks for the lives of those they have lost, to move through the feelings that attend loss and bereavement, and to count their blessings. The theme of each station was illustrated through pictures, scripture texts and included an activity. For instance at the Fear table, you were invited to write your fear on a piece of paper

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and nail it to a roughly made wooden cross.

### From the North

I am convinced that prayer is the key to a church fully alive. Our congregation is ageing and increasingly members find it difficult to be physically active. Nevertheless they still do a remarkable amount. That said, common prayer has until now been something they are shy about. The prayer year has been a great encouragement to learn more. It is also an essential training for congregations in learning how to minister to each other and to others rather than be ministered to.

Maybe you have a story from prayer year that you would like to share. Please send it to [admin@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:admin@vision4life.org.uk)

### Summary

Overall the 24-7 prayer event was much appreciated. Some churches plan to repeat a similar sort of event either at the start of Evangelism Year or at some other point. You can still find the 24-7 material on the website if you missed it. Other prayer year material will also remain on the website during Evangelism Year for those churches that started late or who want to mix and match.

### Other ideas

#### Yorkshire: 5<sup>th</sup> November 2010

This year the autumn meeting of the Yorkshire Synod will be on 6<sup>th</sup> November. It has been proposed that 5<sup>th</sup> November should be a day of prayer in preparation for that Synod. Churches around the Synod are invited to take part in whatever way seems appropriate to them. Perhaps they would like to hold a prayer meeting or vigil on that day, or perhaps they'd like to try some form of prayer that is as yet new to them like walking a prayer labyrinth.

#### Making prayer powerpoints

Palmers Green URC in Thames North Synod are holding a series of workshops to encourage people to experiment with making powerpoint presentations that can be used as part of the prayer and worship sessions. No previous experience is necessary and the sessions are meant to be light and informal. It is hoped that the creative outcomes of these sessions will be used in prayer meetings and worship sessions during the year.

If you have an idea that you'd like to share with others, why not send it in?

#### Prayer of Adoration for Guy Fawkes Eve

In the unexpected bang of a firework  
we wonder at the bang that began the universe.  
In the cheerful chatter of people celebrating  
we wonder at the first creating word.

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In the warm glow of happy company

we wonder at the life of the travelling teacher.

In the woosh and spin of rocket and Catherine wheel

we wonder at the energy of faith and life.

As we wonder, God of all,

open us to your amazing presence

as Creator, Companion and Renewer.

Janet Lees

## EVALUATION

Evaluation is vital to the Vision4Life process. Please try to reflect on the year and in what way it has been transforming the church as you experience it. Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material and remember to send in your feedback to [admin@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:admin@vision4life.org.uk)

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

## THE NEXT STEP

More new material for Evangelism Year will be appearing on the website shortly. The new Evangelism Year booklet was sent out by post in September 2010 to signed up churches.

Prayer Year material will still be available as is Bible Year material. Please contact us if you have any questions or comments.

## HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group about general or website V4L issues via the website or at [admin@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:admin@vision4life.org.uk)

If you have comments and particularly contributions to the prayer year, you can email the V4L prayer year coordinator via [prayer@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:prayer@vision4life.org.uk)

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email:

Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: [evangelism@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:evangelism@vision4life.org.uk)