

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7 [NIV]

Update on Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer – an Amazing Challenge!



As many of our readers will be aware, a new national landmark which aims to profile a million answered prayers has been given the go ahead to be built on a site near Coleshill on the outskirts of Birmingham.

Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer is expected to attract 300,000 visitors each year. The 'eternal' arch structure will be constructed using one million bricks, with each representing individual prayers that have been answered for people across the country. In addition, using interactive technology and a bespoke app, visitors will be able to use their smart device, holding it against any brick to read the individual answered prayers and the personal stories behind them. The Founder and Executive Consultant to the project Richard Gamble says:

"Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer will make hope visible to the UK. It is unique in that it is all about the community. What we're doing is historic. We want to celebrate and remember all the prayers that God has answered for individuals throughout our nation's history. Each answered prayer could provide hope to those who

visit. Our desire is to create thought-provoking public art and offer a space for recreation and reflection for everyone. Our hope is that those who visit will see how God can bring peace in life's storms and be encouraged to reflect on the power and relevance of prayer."

An **Answered Prayer Challenge** took place during January and February 2021, spreading stories of hope across social media. The campaign was run jointly by **Eternal Wall** and **Premier**. Posts containing **#answeredprayerchallenge** and **#makehopevisible** spread in viral style across the globe with 1.3 million people engaging in the first 24 hours of the campaign. By day 5, encouraging stories of answered prayer had landed in the social media feeds of 2 million people around the world, reaching 3 million at the halfway point of the campaign. Richard Gamble said: "An estimated 3 million people have watched an answered prayer on their phone already, which is simply incredible. We just want to keep this momentum going, being able to encourage people during this difficult time – shining a ray of hope into people's lives wherever they are." For more details please visit www.eternalwall.org.uk

On & Off Duty

Avon and Somerset CPA update – by Gavin Jennings (CPA Branch Leader)

Our policing area, like all, has been hit hard by the COVID pandemic. However, in the last year we have had lots to give thanks for, to balance out the sad losses we have had too. So, before I press on with this update, I want to pray for you all –

'May our Lord's Spirit be more than just the cooling breeze on a summers day; may the Spirit bring healing when you are ill, may the Spirit calm your souls in times of fear and give you courage, may the Spirit lift your hearts to know joy in times of sadness, may the Spirit bolster your resolve when you feel all is lost, may the Spirit give you words of wisdom when you are confused or at a loss what to do, and may the Spirit guide you ever closer to the truth of Christ and knowledge of his everlasting Love. Amen.'

Over the last twelve months we have been blessed by the hard work of our team, with a special mention to Stephen who stepped in as our secretary. This hard work has seen a growth in our membership. We have held weekly prayer meetings at midday on a Friday which has helped people to cope with lock down and encouraged people to reach out to each other. We have other new members on our leadership team: – Abigail, Saj, Sarah, Debbie and many other active members helping. Abigail and Sarah have been working hard with our social media creating vlogs and blogs; inspirational to us all. We will be saying a fond farewell to Kelton who has stepped down from his Chaplaincy role in Avon and Somerset and also as our branch's faith advisor, we wish him every success in his new ventures.

We continue to see the success of working with CPA Community Partner, ROC. Our Taunton project is going strong, and a new project in Weston-Super-Mare started at the beginning of the first lockdown and is now going from strength to strength helping our communities in partnership. We look forward to starting one in BRISTOL CITY. Please pray for its success too.

So now I say it is a time for NEW BEGINNINGS; as the Bible teaches us, new beginnings usually follow birthing pains of some sort, just read about Noah, Moses, Job and, of course, Christ on the cross. It is up to us to understand and to learn how to welcome the new, whilst holding on tight to the promises of our Lord, which are eternally faithful, and be ever watchful for the opportunities His Spirit grants us.

CPA also recently welcomed a new Community Partner based in Avon and Somerset – **Counselling4Christians** (C4C). Tori and Ellie (CPA



members) set up **Counselling4Christians** following many "God-incidences" and much prayer. Tori and Ellie told CPA that *"Christian Counselling does not mean that we use the Bible or quote scripture during counselling sessions, neither of us are Ministers! We just believe that as practicing Christians we offer a real understanding of what it means to have a faith."*

"Being a Christian does not mean that we are superhuman. We are not immune to anxiety, depression, anger, relationship issues, PTSD. In fact we may add to this the guilt that we "should" be able to cope better BECAUSE we have our faith. Our hope is that C4C will show people that it is "ok" to ask for help and to lessen any stigma of not being a "good enough Christian".

Tori and Ellie believe that Police Officers may think that they "should" be able to cope with everything they experience. They believe it is very important to work on the stigma that seeing a counsellor is somehow weak. Suicide risks in the police are a great concern. However, talking helps, counselling helps – *"it certainly saved my life"* says Tori.

In April/May, Tori and Ellie will be offering an Anxiety course (over 4 weeks) and starting a new confidential small Therapy Group. **Counselling4Christians** offers these with a Christian base, and can also offer bespoke courses for employees, family and friends of Avon & Somerset Constabulary. As accredited online counsellors they can also offer these courses to any Police Force area. For more information please visit: www.Counselling4Christians.co.uk or Email: counselling4christians@yahoo.com

New Community Partner, River of Life International Church, Felixstowe – an introduction from Reverend Charlie Mackenzie

'Hi everyone, my name is Charlie, I am the Lead Pastor of River of Life International Church in Felixstowe. Our church is the largest in the Felixstowe area. We have been in existence for 18 years, having been started by Terry and Juanita Baker in their Felixstowe home, before moving to Brackenbury Sports Centre and finally in our modern 1000 seater Community building in 2004.

As the name suggests, we are a Bible believing fellowship of Christians, and although most of us are local, we also draw our membership from over 20 nations including those from as far apart as China, Vietnam, Tanzania and India.

We are very much a community minded church and in my short time here, we have made links with the other churches in town, local charities and of course our local Police Community Officer. The church is keen to support the work of CPA as we feel especially at this time, our officers and families are under even more stress than normal. So praying and encouraging our police is not just an option, it's

a God given obligation.

I have just returned from pastoring and teaching for almost 20 years in China, Malaysia, Vietnam and East Africa where I witnessed and supported (whenever possible) police officers in all these countries. Having done so, I also now even more so appreciate the professionalism and maturity of our own officers here in the UK.

As a church we have therefore applied to be Community Partners, and as a pastor, I am looking at the possibility of becoming a police chaplain within the Norfolk/Suffolk area.

Please look us up via our website River of Life Church: River of Life Church www.riveroflifechurch.net or visit our Facebook page. We are so happy to support the fine work CPA has continued to do for many decades.



Charlie Mackenzie with local Community Officer



Police Online Alpha – do you want to be involved?

CPA Coordinator Mike Quinnell and Devon and Cornwall Police Chaplain Reverend Paul Wright have arranged to jointly lead a 13 week Police Online Alpha Course starting on **Tuesday 6th April finishing on Tuesday 29th June**. Each Online Alpha session will be via 'Zoom'.

It's a great 13 week online course where you can explore the Christian faith and God and where any of the 'big' questions can be asked! Paul and Mike have run several of these Alpha courses over the years and it's equally perfect for atheists, agnostics and anyone else in-between!

If you are interested in the Alpha Course please email info@cpauk.net



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OUR MISSION is to

- Be a National Voice for Christians in Policing.
- Encourage and support Christians in the Police Service.
- Communicate in words and action, the truth, message and hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ to colleagues and the community we serve.
- Build bridges between the Christian community and the Police.

OUR VISION is to see

- The CPA as a national charity which actively leads on issues relevant to Christians in Policing.
- An active and growing branch of CPA in every Police Service in the UK and every Christian in the Police Service to fulfil their potential in Jesus Christ.
- Colleagues and those we serve to know Jesus Christ personally.
- Police and Churches working together in every community to reduce crime and improve quality of life.

President Deputy Chief Constable Paul Netherton OBE **Chair of Council** A/Inspector Marie Reavey
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ON & OFF DUTY is the CPA monthly digest of news and articles. We also update a monthly Prayer Diary intended to inform and encourage those associated with the CPA. Please forward any items to office@CPAuk.net by the 20th of each month.

NB. All articles published will also be available for unrestricted viewing via the Internet. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the CPA Council.

Christian Police Association
46-50 Rutherford Drive, Park Farm
Wellingborough NN8 6AX

Tel: 01933 409485
Email: info@CPAuk.net
Skype: cpaukhq

 @uk_cpa
 /christianpoliceassociation
Registered Charity: 220482 (E&W) SCO43784 (Scotland)



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