

Paul B's Christmas Newsletter

December 2007

Dear Friends,

Firstly my apologies for not sending out a newsletter so far this year. I could find plenty of reasons, maybe some excuses, many valid: it's been a great year on the one hand, and tough on the other. The early part and middle of the year were a blur of visits to England and elsewhere, mostly close to the UK so I could visit my mum as often as possible. Many of you know that mum is in dementia care in Cornwall, and has been for more than 18 months, and in the early months she suffered a number of life-threatening infections which made me want to see her as often as I could. The infections have eased now, and life is getting more back to normal...though I am still trying to visit mum every 4-6 weeks or so. I really have valued your prayers despite the 'silence', as the constant yo-yoing back and forth between England and America has been incredibly demanding, and somewhat expensive! It has meant that I have turned down a lot of opportunities to go great distances away from England, but it seems right to look at those trips again for next year. It WAS right to finally head for Colombia in October...

...so I'm starting to write this newsletter from the winter of Colombia (34Celsius today!), where God is doing all sorts of wonderful things. More of that in a while!

It's been an astonishing first 'full year' of living in the USA – so right to be there, with Restoration Christian Centre, Newport News: I am closer than ever to the Pastors John & Mary, very much part of their extended family: closer too, to the 'Rhinos' (my accountability group – time away with them is so vital, and is first in my diary/agenda when planning the year), and I've spent more time than ever in England speaking and preaching than in the previous 3-4 years combined! One of the contributory factors to my going to the States was that I did very little in Europe or the UK... but God's wonderful sense of humour has taken me away to 'bring me back' it seems.

WEB SITE!

After years of umm-ing and ahh-ing about a website, 2007 saw the launch of www.paulbennison.com. My good friend Tim Cole offered his considerable services at early in the year, and while there are still some things to

be done to it, the site is up and running. I think it looks great, and comments about it so far have been terrific. It has a real 'Michael Palin Around the World/Indiana Jones' feel to it, and Tim has done such a fantastic job: it's exactly what I would have wanted if I had the ability to be creative in that area! It is so good to have a forum where I can share testimonies from people whose lives have been changed by God either through salvation or healing, and for me, that – and the blog page (which I will try and keep up to date a few times a week!) – are the main reasons for its existence. It does give people who don't know me an opportunity to find out a little more about me (!)...Please have a look at it, and let me know how you think it could be improved or changed. It also means I now have an email address paul@paulbennison.com which is a little easier to remember than the dozen or so I already have, and support can also be given online on the site by credit and debit cards through the Dove Trust.

Which brings me on to Inspire Magazine, a great publication in England, who featured a story of what God did in Colombia last year on their website. That brought a great deal of response, and was ostensibly the reason why (and how) I have begun to work in Sweden. Other places are still following up provisional invitations, so thank you, Russ and Inspire Magazine: may you long continue! (www.inspiremagazine.org.uk).



With Revd Arley Guaza, President of the Cali, Colombia Pastor's Association: John Crowder, my Pastor from Virginia, and Tim Cole, a great friend and Worship Leader from England

CPO, who publish Inspire Magazine, also printed for me this year a great promotional flyer: I've attached one to the email newsletters, and sent one with the snail mail letters. If you could use some to promote what I do, I'd be very grateful: and if you want some to give leaders in your church if you'd like me to come and speak, I can send them to you!

Ministry in England...

God's sense of humour is wonderful, not least in the fact that I've preached and taught in England so much more this year! It has been a real blessing, and the year has been interspersed with visits to 'old' and new places. Early in the year it was a joy to spend the weekend with long-time friends Neal & Eluned Swettenham and their relatively new **Vineyard Church in Melton Mowbray**. No jokes about who ate all the pies! It was a great weekend, and there was one particularly lovely report of the healing from cancer of the father of one of the ladies in the church, who we prayed for by proxy in his absence. A couple of really great visits, too, to **City Church, Plymouth**. It is like a 'home' church in England for me, and I always appreciate my time there enormously.

At **Maranatha Church, Exeter**, in May, had a great time of ministry and praying for people in an 'environment' of faith built by the leader, my dear friend Andrew Pearkes. Things always 'happen' there, and for me it was a double blessing as I met Stuart & Heidi Plympton. I'd heard a bit about Heidi being very prophetic, but didn't know who she was. Before the meeting started, a few folk were praying for me and suddenly this prophetic word began about God 'taking me and my ministry off the page'... well, anyone who knows me and my Bible will know that it is riddled with 'Post It' notes, my favourite form of notes for preaching from! Coming off the page – into even more of God's great reality? I pray so! Heidi & I have done quite a bit together since then, and it is great to work alongside someone who hears God so clearly and powerfully as she does.



With Heidi, and lovely Finnish Pastor Pauli & Soila Kemi from Agape Church, Stockholm, Sweden

It was so good to go back to **Holy Trinity, Twydall** (near Gillingham, Kent) in July. Gill Tovar, the Vicar there, has been a friend for many years since being on the same Spring Harvest pastoral team: I have a real sense that breakthrough is coming there in healing, salvation, and blessing, so it's good to be going back there again. Had a wonderful weekend in **Tottenham**, North London, in July, with **Rhema Church**: it is wonderful to worship in African churches, especially in England! I'd love to go back there again. First time visit to **Kingsbridge Baptist**, Devon: great friends Dave & Sian FJ and their family go there, and to get to know the Pastor, Jonathan, and pray for a whole load of people in his church has been a blessing and a half. First time visit, too, to **Bagley Baptist** in Somerset: a church expanding fast, with a great new premises, and people who just want to experience more of God. I think I must have prayed for just about everyone that Sunday! The night before, I'd spoken at a Full Gospel Businessmen's Meeting in Street, which was also a great time.

My friends Damon & Amanda had me to speak in their church a couple of times, **Revelation Church, Portsmouth**: two lovely meetings, but even better to get to know more and more some of the folk in the church. A good evening at **Worthing Tabernacle**, where God tangibly touched people's lives with healing, including a lovely man named Herbert, who'd had terrible problems with his legs, but who marched down the church after prayer to tell me he'd been walking around outside for 10 minutes with no pain... back in April, I'd had the privilege of praying with one of the real saints in the Kingdom, a lady named Pam, who'd been told she didn't have long to live with cancer. At 81 years old, God wonderfully began to restore her, to a point where the same doctors told her she could expect another 5 years at least. God is so, so good!!! It was good, too, to have the chance to speak at a men's breakfast, also from Worthing Tabernacle: it was in Shoreham Airport's restaurant (great breakfast!), and it was good to have the chance to share with men some of the great things God is doing today around the world.

Some great ministry, too, in the USA! A wonderful weekend conference in my home church, which Heidi came to as well, and there were some incredibly powerful prophetic words and some healings. I've got really involved, too, with a lovely Fellowship in Williamsburg, lead by Frank & Phoebe Shaia: it's my second home in the USA already!

COLOMBIA

Only one visit to Colombia this year, but it was worth the wait! My Pastor John, and good friend Tim Cole, a UK based worship leader, went with me. Went back to many of the churches I regularly go to, but also to some new ones this time: better still, it was possible to go into five or six hospitals, and wow, did God turn up! Early on, we were involved in a night vigil on one of Cali's satellite towns, Jamundi: night meetings aren't usually my forte (!), and as we knew this one wasn't scheduled to finish until 3am (Colombian time read 4am!!) it was a struggle to go there for 10pm. Both John & I shared, and Tim brought a fresh wave of God's presence as he sang. God healed many that night, including a lady, Wency, of cancer, and the Pastor's Father, who had been deaf, and delightfully told me minutes after prayer that he wasn't any longer... During the three weeks there, we saw many healed of cancers, one particularly lovely occasion was in praying for a staff member at the hospital San Juan de Dios, who had thyroid cancer, and a particularly swollen one at that. Put my hand on her throat, and as we prayed, it visibly disappeared.

Part of the visit was organized by my long-time friend Pastor Hendrik Hoere, whose fast-growing church (The Shadow of the Almighty) is like my 'home' church in Cali... the rest was organized by a lovely pastor, Walter Torres, who opened doors into churches for me that I've never been to before. In Walter's church, there is one of the nations' leading neurosurgeons, Dunia Quiroga, and it was Dunia who in turn opened doors into all the hospitals that she works in. Through Walter, we also met the president of the Cali Pastors Association, Arley Guaza: he invited us preach the night after we met, and we had a fantastic time in his church in Agua Blanca, one of the toughest areas of the city... one lady, who just HAPPENED to be walking past the church the day of the meeting (no one just 'happens' to be in Agua Blanca – visitors don't go there) saw the notices put on the doors of the church about a healing meeting... she'd driven 24 hours to Cali just prior to seeing the signs, to take her daughter to hospital. The daughter had severe scoliosis, her head was turned at an angle to her shoulders, her legs were deformed, and much, much more: mum was one of the first to the front when I asked people who wanted healing to respond, saying 'I thought we'd driven here to go to hospital, but now I know God had other plans!' The daughter's back straightened noticeably, and the process of reshaping her whole skeletal frame began...

In the children's hospital, Club Noel, Dunia took us to the section where all the chronic disease children were. Cancer, AIDS, pneumonia, kidney dysfunction – you name it, it was there. We went from room to room praying: it is amazing how tiring it is praying in those sort of conditions, but we were there probably 2 & a half hours. We went back the next week, and every room was empty, except two – and one of those children was going home that day. All the rest had gone home healed! I have Dunia on video (remember she's a top medic) talking about the miracles we saw during the 3 weeks – it'll be on the website just as soon as I can learn how to format it for the internet! Dozens of churches visited, hundreds and hundreds healed, and saved: I just end up repeating myself from newsletter to newsletter about Cali!!!

SWEDEN



A real privilege to have time with a number of Christian MPs in the Swedish Parliament, who wanted to hear about what God is doing their nation

Two fantastic visits to Sweden, where God moved in amazing power in just about every meeting.. many miracles, including two stroke-paralysed men in the city of Vasteras getting out of wheelchairs in City Church and walking out...a lovely man, Gunnar, in Vininge, unable to blink with no visible eyelids (also as a result of a stroke – they'd just disappeared) blinking after a prayer (on a Wednesday) where I heard my mouth say 'by the weekend you'll be blinking'... a lady named Ingaliill who got a new kneecap in during a Pastor's lunch in Orebro...in Skara, a lady with terminal cancer, Carolina,

knew she was healed: as Heidi, Tim, and I prayed for her, we felt her 'pulling' faith and power out of us as God pumped it in... it was quite an experience! In a meeting in City Church, Stockholm, I prayed for a lady with scoliosis, and as I had my hand on her spine, I felt the bones moving under it.. that was quite something, too! Though I don't know the end of the story of a man named Kent, whom I met with Heidi as we had coffee in a shopping mall in Gothenburg, I am convinced that his healing was well underway... he, too, had had a stroke, and we saw him with his carer in his wheelchair, and just had to pray with him. He was in tears as we prayed, and God visibly touched his life. It was a moving experience. So MANY stories from Sweden: I'll try and get a lot on the webpage!



NORTHERN IRELAND

So good to go back to West Church, Bangor: it is a thriving fellowship that touches just about every area of the community, and is wide open to seeing God move. I was there for 9 days from 8 September, returning for 3 days in October, and go there again next week. It was so wonderful to see God move like He does in Latin America, Africa, and like He did in Sweden! Many stories will ultimately be on the website, but to tell you a few... a lovely 3 year old girl, Jenny, was diagnosed in June with a large brain tumour on the brain stem. She had received large doses of chemotherapy, radiation, the treatment had caused a cyst to form and her head was swollen with the tumour and the steroids. I arrived the day after dad & mum, Michael & Lynne Johnston, had been told Jenny had 2 weeks to live. I could only see LIFE over her, and visited Jenny every day I was in Bangor. God began a process of what I believe will be total restoration, but in stages, as I felt strongly that there was a much bigger picture than Jenny's healing, that would change churches, the community, and the hearts of doctors and oncologists. Over the next few weeks, Jenny improved, with an occasional 'hiccup' in her move towards total healing. The specialist doctor said, about 5 weeks ago, that everything that had shut down in Jenny was 'irreversible': just the sort of challenge I love and that God revels in! I'd gone back to Ireland for 3 days to pray with Jenny again and be with the family. From that moment, almost in the exact order that her body had closed down from June, it began to reverse...as I write, Jenny is talking, eating, and enjoying her zany (I'm told – I look forward to finding out 1st hand!!) sense of humour... I have a real sense that she will be scanned when I'm back there, and it will be totally clear.. Jenny's healing IS already changing people's lives, and when Michael & Lynne hold the clear scan, I'm wanting to hear that the oncologist says...miracle! Please pray that God will so wonderfully glorify Jesus through Jenny's miracle and her testimony to come.

A lovely man, Andy, in his sixties I guess, had class 1 diabetes, Parkinson's, and motor neurone disease: prayed for him on a Sunday, saw him the following Friday, he'd been to hospital in between, been scanned – and had none of the diseases... a lady named Christine had been diagnosed with bowel cancer and liver complications: she knew she was healed as she left the meeting, and scans have proved it! Other cancers went, too. Helen had lost her voice 5 months before being prayed for Milton, her husband, missed being nagged!! – only joking!), the doctors had no idea what was wrong: I spoke that she'd have her voice back within 3 days, and it was much quicker than that! As she left the lovely Free Methodist church, she spoke to the Pastor... I could go on and on...!

DIARY

I'm purposely keeping my diary/agenda short-dated for the next year, as there are so many opportunities, I want to know that I can take them as and when God says go... I feel much more secure booking a year or 18 months ahead, but I know this is right for now! So... here's how it stands to date:

JANUARY

1-8	Home in USA
9-11	England
11-18	Serbia
20-29	USA
30	To England

FEBRUARY

1-7	Romania
8-10	England
10	St Luke's Church, Maidstone
12-13	With my accountability group
17	Frensham Baptist
22-29	USA

MARCH

14-28	Sweden
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APRIL

1-30	Colombia
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I'll update the website every few days. Please pray, as I have invitations to: Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, Rwanda, Burundi, India (4 cities), Cameroon, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico, Kenya (3 cities), Uganda, Pakistan (4 cities), Haiti, Cuba, Tanzania, Malawi, and various places in the USA, principally Alaska, Milwaukee, Oklahoma – so I really need wisdom & provision.

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FINALLY...

Thank you so much for your prayers. I covet them. I'm so grateful for such love and support. You'll see from the plans and opportunities that 2008 is going to be a demanding year, but I received a prophetic word in Colombia from a lovely Pastor that the coming year was going to see an 'explosion' (his word) in my ministry and that signs and wonders would multiply rapidly. I'm believing for that from God!

Many of you know that this year started very tough, as all my Christmas mail went missing last year (the Royal Mail delivered it to a house that didn't exist – demolished – even though there was a mail redirection in place, and lots of gifts went astray never to be found. There are mail redirections on for my old Worthing address & the Arundel address,

BUT - if you ARE thinking of sending a gift (and I'd be so, so grateful as these past months and the next ones have been, and are hugely expensive!), perhaps you would send it care of:

13 Meadow Way, ADDLESTONE, Surrey KT15 1UF

I so value your support and love!

I hope and pray that you have a blessed and peaceful Christmas, and a new year where god's favour rests on you. Please keep in touch! I love to hear from you.

With love and blessings, *Paul Bennison*