

Paul Bennison's Christmas & Winter News

December 2011

Celebrating the arrival of any baby is high on most people's list of great events. As we head into the Christmas season, if ever we, as Christians need to be immensely grateful to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, for coming himself into a lost and broken world, and, through the presence of His wonderful Holy Spirit with us every minute of every day, it ought to be now... Thank you, Lord, for Jesus. Thank you for the first Christmas, even more for the first Easter.

As we watch our world slide into economic, social, and moral chaos, how much, right now, do we need to see the people of God grasp heaven, and bring it to earth, with the love, compassion, power, and gentleness of Jesus. For many of you, this has been a tough year (I'd count myself in that group, too!) – but I pray that the amazing Presence of the Living Lord Jesus will fill your homes, your lives, your families, your hearts, and your souls this Christmastime, and that Heaven will indeed touch earth in your experience as we move into 2012.

So many good things have happened since the summer newsletter! I'm just back from the most wonderful trip to Colombia (what, again? I hear you ask! Yes!)- with such a great group of men: Mark Marx & Scott Lorimer, from Coleraine, Northern Ireland, and Simon Allaby, from Bolney, Sussex. The period since July has encompassed England (many places!), Egypt, Romania, Cyprus, Colombia. I've been involved with the Healing Rooms, Healing on the Streets, and many churches. And, 2-3 days with the beloved, vital, essential Rhinos....

I also had the 'interesting' appointment at the Embassy of the United States, in London (a précised version of that later!).

It was also suggested to me that I tried to fit too much in to my newsletter, so hopefully this will be an easier-to-read summarised version. My problem is that there are so many stories, I want to tell them all to you....! Maybe you'll just have to have me come to your church to tell more.... ☺.

The coming months involve Bolivia, Chile, Mexico (definitely, Benny!), Australia, Colombia, Romania, Sweden, and more....

EGYPT

I realised when I was asked to go, just for 3 days, to pray with some sick friends of friends, that it was 19 years since I'd last been to this amazing country. Then, it was the middle of the first Gulf War: this time, the revolution, which seemed to have died down somewhat post March, began again... It was a real privilege to be there, to enjoy the heat(! – Egypt in July is pretty hot!). It was lovely to meet people, make new friends, but what shocked me most was in the hotel I stayed in (something I rarely have the privilege of). My experience of Arab shops over the years is of er...persistent salesmen trying to sell everything from Tutankhamen to carpets to their grand-mothers ... I politely told the young man in the hotel shop that I was OK looking for a few minutes, at which point he backed off of his sales pitch and asked me if he could tell me about Jesus.... 90 minutes of lovely fellowship later, with his Arabic/English NIV Bible open on his desk, I felt duty bound to buy some stuff, but I was so impressed with his boldness and fearlessness. We prayed with each other, and I'd have loved to have spent a lot more time with him. Needless to say, I want to go back to Egypt....

*God puts all his best gifts on the lower shelves so
that everyone can play.*

John Wimber

UNITED KINGDOM

*It has been a delight to be regularly involved in churches in the UK again, from Bridport to Plymouth, Exeter, Catford, Maidstone, Worcester, Orpington.... The return visit in July to **Bridport Christian Fellowship**, was lovely: it's always nice to be invited back! I once heard a very famous preacher introduce himself as 'Hello, I'm, I've preached everywhere once!' - so I never take for granted return invitations. **Maranatha, Exeter**, was, as always, a terrific evening, with loads of people to pray for, as at Bridport. I love being with my Rhino buddies' churches, so to be back at **Green Street Green Baptist church, Orpington**, with John & Yvonne Pressdee, was terrific: it's always such a pleasure to go to John & Yvonne's church, it's so relaxed yet with such a powerful sense of God's presence. As so often happens, too, you meet people whom you just KNOW are divine appointment meetings – for so many years, since I stopped doing the 'YWAM Circuit', I've wanted to go back to India, and, that evening at GSG, a wonderful apostolic prophetic preacher was visiting, P C Alexander, and we just 'connected'... That followed another visit to **Brownhill Road Baptist Church, Catford**. On arrival at Brownhill Road, Dave, one of the sound men, told me that an injury he'd needed physiotherapy for for 18 years had been 99% healed when I had the pleasure of praying for him in January. At **Loose Baptist, Maidstone**, where I'd not been for a couple of years, a wonderful miracle took place with the healing of massive spinal injuries for a lady named Lynn – a good number of other healings that morning, too. 7-8 years ago, she fell down the stairs, completely 'compacted' vertebra 5-8, wrecked her sacroiliac joint (a large lump there), hadn't walked without sticks for 7 years, wore morphine patches with a pain level on a 1-10 scale...of 12. Within minutes, she was walking down the church without her sticks (canes, Americans!), then walked up AND down the 6 stairs to the platform unaided, with all her pain gone... Mark, one of the leaders, wrote to me a few days later to say there were another 11 confirmed healings from that morning. It was a real blessing to be invited back to **City Church, Worcester**, in October: I'd spoken at their church camp in June. God did some wonderful things during those few days in the city: a great day at the **River School**, I think I got to speak to all the students in the day, and have their – often profound – questions fired at me! On the Sunday, it was a privilege, as always, to pray for many: some healings were instant, including one lady – Lisa – I recall, 'losing' all her body pain! – and the uncle of one of the young people, Ben – in a deep coma following a motorbike accident a month earlier: the doctors had said nothing could be done, and if he ever 'woke up' he'd be a cabbage... 2 hours later, he woke up, and was off all life-support! A few weeks later, I heard from one of the leaders about a lady who had (or should I now say WHO'D had!) non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, lots of tumours, including a 'fist sized tumour' attached to her heart.... after being scanned the following week, they'd all gone...*

COLOMBIA

I hope the day NEVER comes when God says that my 'season' of going to this wonderful country is over... before I try and condense an amazing 3 weeks into a few lines, try this web link: <http://www.causewaycoastvineyard.com/download/827> - it's Mark Marx speaking at his home church, the Causeway Coast Vineyard, Coleraine, telling stories of our time together in Cali last month... so it's not just ME telling the stories: I'm acutely aware that there ARE people who think they're 'made up', exaggerated... so it was an amazing blessing to have Mark, who heads up the international 'Healing on the Streets' ministry, Scott Lorimer (Mark's 2011/12 intern), and my lovely mate Simon Allaby, pastor of Bolney Chapel, and with his own evangelistic trust, 6:19, with me... 16 years, 40 visits, and I love it more than ever.

The trip is a story of multiple miracles EVERY day: whole waiting rooms of patients being healed – many people NOT waiting to go and see the doctor they'd an appointment for: dozens of babies and young children getting healed at Club Noel, the kids hospital: miracles in very odd meetings! Healing on the Streets was launched in Cali too: in about 2½ hours, well over 200 prayed for on the first day, virtually all of them healed instantly, according to local pastor Wilmar Gomez...

One meeting we all went to turned out to be 1½ hours about health and safety in churches! We'd been told it was a pastor's association meal – we never made it to the meal bit! All of us are now experts in different types of fire extinguishers (in Spanish, of course), and what diagrams to paint on walls and floors for safety purposes...(!) – BUT... dozens of the pastors asked us to pray after the health & safety bit was over (we missed the meal, too busy praying!!). One lady pastor, Aida – chronic scoliosis (I think her story's on Mark's link above) – it had damaged her shoulder too, a large lump on her chest just below her shoulder. She came from one of the most dangerous districts of the city, a tiny Assemblies of God church, and after we'd prayed for her, she tentatively asked Walter (one of my dearest friends and a very rare pastor indeed, networking across the city), if there was any chance of any of us going to her church. She assumed not, as it's small, and 'dangerous'... we all went, there were about 15 people there: Aida – totally healed with scans to prove it, others got healed, including her son, and husband, Hernan (pictured with us)... it's the area of the city where most of the 'sicario' gangs hang out –for\$60 they are the hit men who will kill anyone you want killed... There has always



been, for me, a real sense of God's favour in Cali: this time, more than ever. In Nueva EPS, a 'poor people's' hospital, where we went a number of times, saw many healed – then had a 'visit' from the hospital's deputy director – not to reprimand or shut us down, but to ask if we'd go to another waiting room upstairs to pray for people – who turned out to be the doctors, nurses, and admin staff of the hospital! – and with an open invitation to go any and every day... another lovely 'networking' pastor, William Castaño, whom I had met for the first time on this trip, had a call from the director of the largest hospital in the city,

University Hospital, to say he heard about what was happening in other hospitals, and could we go to his, please..? I used to go there often, but local Christians thought to invade it en masse to pray for people when mostly it was just a good idea, got the hospital 'closed' to outsiders for a few years, so this is a miracle... and William is opening up the prisons to me and, whoever is with me in the future, again...

How do I condense this trip?? I can't... if you want to read more, there's more in my blog, www.paulbennison.com under the 'blog' tab, and there's amazing stuff virtually every day... two more things just to highlight... visiting a house filled with extremely old, infirm, desperately sick people – it is called 'The Mercy of Jesus – the Foundation and Place for the Abandoned Elderly'. It's in an extremely dangerous district: at least 35 old folk thrown out by families and hospitals because they are untreatable, can't afford medication, etc., run by a lady, Anabeiva, who, when she looks at you, it's Jesus looking at you. She has NO support, from churches or government, the place was immaculate, the elderly folk well dressed in 5th or 6th generation clothing, and Anabeiva cares for them with SUCH love and commitment – and she is (no, was) dying with cancer (I guess she's in her 50's). I asked her if I could pray for her before we prayed for all her lovely inmates: she fell to her knees, sobbing, and clutched my legs just saying 'thank you, thank you'....I think anyone NOT to be wrecked by such a humbling experience would need to examine not only their faith but their whole lives.... she says she knows she was healed that day... her smile in the picture



months old, dad spoke to us as he waited to fontanelle had closed over (should normally not only head deformity, but brain damage, room to grow... he had x-rays to show it. looked at the scan taken that day, his skull hospital WAY over the other side of the city, as we arrive to pray for people, dad – and mum – and baby Jose Luis were sitting on the wall waiting for us, to say thank you. How long they'd been there, or how long it took them to get there, we'll never know, but the hugging, laughter, and tears said all that needed to be said. Neighbours to the hospital came to find out what the commotion was all about – and they got healed on the street as they heard....

says it all. And then there was Jose Luis: 4 see neuro-surgeon friend Dunia. His son's take 2 years), meaning that he would suffer as that 2 years is vital in giving the brain Dunia rang me later to say that when she had 'opened' up again... next day, at a

It's been an astonishing year - the middle east uprisings; Gadaffi and Bin Laden dead; Europe (and much of the rest of the world) in financial meltdown; Japan's earthquake and tsunami; rioting & looting across the United Kingdom in August; so, so much to fear. But...where evil abounds, there grace will abound even more... so said the apostle Paul in Romans 5:20 – and went on to say that grace WILL reign...

I'm so excited to be alive right now. Wholly aware of the onslaught of the enemy in many aspects of my life – **health** (I'm not immune to being unwell because I pray for healing – I think it makes me more of a target, to be honest!) – if I listened to what doctors tell me, I'd hide under a blanket and sign on for benefits... **personal** – this absurd situation with the United States 'rolls' on, having had what should have been my 'yes or no' (interview? Sic – interrogation) in August, which just turned into more questions (it's 31 months now since I saw my 'stuff' there, and 3 years since seeing my family, which hurts me more than anything else): it's obvious they have no legal grounds to refuse my residency as that would have happened a long time back, so it's just 'the process'... **finance** - we're in a world recession, so it's pretty much to be expected that I've lost a lot of my personal supporters. Once upon a time, Colombia, for instance used to be 'cheap' for westerners to visit, but the pound has crashed against its peso, and has trebled the cost of being there, at least, in the last 3-4 years. And how could anyone not LEAVE money with people like Anabeiva...?

An 'old' friend (by that, in duration, not age!) who is now retired and living in the Philippines, put on my Facebook page a suggestion that people (he started the ball rolling, bless him!) give £1 a month through PayPal, and that if 25% of my 2200+ friends gave £1 a month, it would be revolutionary for me... it would be. It's just that he's the only one who did what he suggested... ☺! As someone who worked in a bank, even after 33 years of God providing, finance rears its head, mostly when people mention words like 'pension' (well, I AM 60 next year!) – I don't have one: and sometimes, just sometimes, I think it would be lovely to be able to relax into a trip like the Colombia without the stress of covering all the costs, AND to be able to give money away to people like Anabeiva.... Once again, if you are in a position to help, I can't tell you how much I appreciate and pray for regular – and one off – support. Stewardship are amazing in their ministry in helping 'process' gifts for 'little' people like me (I have lost about 5 stone this year, 70 pounds, Americans!) – P O Box 99, Loughton, Essex IG10 3QJ, my account with them is 20028331 (Paul A. Bennison), and, of course, I get the additional 20%+ tax back if you pay tax. If you CAN help, but DON'T pay tax, I can send you bank account details....

My gratitude to you for your love, prayer, and support, is immense. Thank you. For the coming year, I really feel that God wanted me to stay even more 'flexible' than I thought I'd become (!) – what I DO know is that between now and June will come qll the places listed below, plus any engagements that come my way in churches in the UK. Maybe – who knows? – I might even be able to go back to the USA, though I'm not quite sure when I'd fit it in...



This is Jose Luis Snr, Aida, and Jose Luis Jnr., the day after God re-opened his skull....

I could list miracle after miracle, healing after healing.... space has run out. Please, look at my blog! Last thing... if you read my newsletter last Christmas, you might remember the 'apple' lady in Puebla, Mexico: I prayed for her & her husband concerning their desire to have children (they couldn't) and work: the wife was then inundated with private students to teach English to, her husband offered a job at one of the top 4 accountants' companies in the world: today, on Facebook, there is a picture of her – pregnant.... Jesus, you are so, so amazing....

2012

JANUARY - probably Bolivia/Chile, or Mexico/Honduras

FEBRUARY – see January! + Romania

MARCH – Australia

APRIL – Colombia

MAY – Sweden

All that's left is to say, once again, thank you – and have a blessed Christmas and New Year. Maybe in 2012, we'll get to see each other!
With much love, Paul

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