

## UK Report for Global Day of Prayer 2008

2008 is a unique year here in the UK. The whole church has been challenged to take the whole gospel to the whole nation throughout 2008 through Hope08 and there are around 1400 different places taking part (with represents thousands of churches) [www.hope08.com](http://www.hope08.com). Hope08 was launched in prayer, preceded by a year of prayer in 2007 and the Global Day of Prayer has been integrated into the Hope08 initiative.



**Northern Ireland** led the way with 12 events including an unprecedented invitation into Stormont Parliament Building on Pentecost Sunday afternoon. 'We were privileged to be able to hold a service of thanksgiving and prayer inside our Parliament Buildings at Stormont, hosted by one of our MLA's. So far as we are aware, this was the only GDOP event to be held in one of the participating nation's seat of government and it was fitting to come together to add to prayers said over many years for our nation. Because of security concerns it had to be an invitation-only event but over 200 gathered from all parts of the province and farther a field, and from all denominations to pray and to worship the Lord.'

.For a full report from N Ireland [www.transformations-ireland.org](http://www.transformations-ireland.org).

**Around the UK**, we know of around 50 events which took place in Cathedrals, open air parks, on hills, up cranes and in churches, in smaller football stadiums and one large stadium in London. The GDOP vision links in with so many of the grassroots prayer initiatives that are taking place in every town, region, county and nation.

Here is a summary of some key features for 2008 (see **full reports for each venue on** [www.globaldayofprayer.co.uk](http://www.globaldayofprayer.co.uk));

### **The 10 days of prayer**

Many places took part, linking with other existing prayer initiatives in May e.g. Prayer Week, Praying in Parliament, the National Day of Prayer for the Police Force. Medway, Kent: 'We started at 5.00am on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May in the "Powerhouse of Prayer" in Gillingham, which became the scene of tears of repentance, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with signs and wonders following, cries of joy and laughter, fervent praise, sensitive worship, creative prayer, individual and corporate, all of which turned into a 24-10 experience. Day and night God's people met with Him and each other, new relationships were forged and new faith found. God was surely in the house! In London: 50,000 10 day prayer guides were distributed.

### **Unity across the body of Christ**

Many places bore testimony to an increased sense of unity from across the church:

Tamworth: 10 churches in Tamworth joined together in the Castle Grounds to Picnic and Pray together. This event proved to be a great success as it encouraged Christians from all denominations to pray and socialize together. There was number of inquisitive 'passers by' who were spoken to as to why we were doing what we were doing. .

Southampton: Eight hundred gathered in Central Hall representing many different churches in Southampton. "What a wonderful evening, such a joy to see Christians from around the city joining together in Unity, getting a vision and a heart for our city and grasping the hope that together we can reach out to the corners of Southampton for Christ."

Langport, Somerset: Meeting on a hill overlooking the Somerset Levels one had the sense that God was spreading His love over the countryside in response to our prayers...Our fourth year and it was probably the best so far with many local churches participating in the planning and execution of our event.

Isle of Wight: St George's Park Football Club, Newport was the venue for Pentecost08 an event for the whole Island church under the HOPE08 banner and linked to Global Day of Prayer. It was a festival style gathering with gazebo displays by nearly 80 Christian organisations, businesses and churches followed by worship and GDOP prayer event.

## UK Report for Global Day of Prayer 2008

### **Engagement with community issues**

Most places reported how they had prayed for different areas of the local community and many are actively involved in Hope on the Streets over the summer connected to Hope08, e.g.

Luton: We heard brief accounts from a number of different church and Christian groups giving a flavour of what God is doing amongst us: an incarnational outreach to young people by holding a midnight service in one of the biggest pubs on Christmas Eve, outreach to those working in the sex trade, counselling and support work to families under stress, encouragement to black youth to achieve their potential, and a report of our "On the move mission" held the previous weekend, when approximately 30 churches worked together.

### **Creativity**

So many different ways of praying were used:

Southampton: Everyone was offered a piece of a 1000 piece jigsaw of an aerial view of Southampton and encouraged to take these pieces away and use them as reminders to pray for one another and for our city.

Warrington: The walls of the church were decorated with children's prayer footprints, produced at St. Matthew's church during the 10 days of prayer; we were asked to produce our own footprint prayers for the children and these were laid at the front of the church.

Exeter: after a prayer picnic in the grounds of the Cathedral they released c 200 balloons for each nation of the world taking part.

York Minster had a '*prayer parade*' as they walked around a 12 part display in the minster, of prayer points for the council, education and health services, police, churches and the many facets of greater York. To close, the Lord Mayor and her party lead us out of the building with flaming torches. Outside, church leaders with flaming torches had already formed a huge semi-circle surrounding us with fire as the final prayer took place on the steps of the Minster

Norwich Cathedral: Prayer for the nations took place individually as each person had a card with details of a different country to pray for, they were encouraged to take the card home and continue to pray for the country during the year

**Praying on high/significant places:** Scotland took the lead on this.

In Edinburgh: there was a '7 Hills' prayer event on the 11<sup>th</sup> May. Groups gathered on the various hills across the city (c400 people). Each group had agreed to pray the prayer for the world at exactly 3pm and also had a specific prayer to read aloud over our city and nation. Individual themes were taken by each group, covering the '7 mountains (or moulders) of society' i.e. Religion (Church), Business, Education, Government and politics, Media, Arts, entertainment and sports and Family. In Clydebank: 50 local Christians went up on Titan Crane and prayed 150ft high praying over Clydebank.

### **Involvement by youth and prayer for youth**

Many reports featured how young people had been an integral part of the event.

Doncaster: After performing a rap, two Christian young people told the story of the woman caught in adultery whom Jesus refused to condemn, saying: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." All listening were urged to drop their "rocks of judgment" over today's young people and pray for them instead. "When adults see groups of youths standing on street corners, often their first thought is to judge them. But they are probably just catching up with friends. Faced with bullying, exams and peer pressure, they need your prayers. And when they try drugs and alcohol, they still need your support and prayers." Deeply moved by the young men's challenge, one of the participants said: "They broke our hearts."

### **Praying for and with community and governmental leaders**

London: This year's event was held at Millwall Football Stadium and saw 11,000 London Christians worshipping and praying. In recognition of the event's increasing importance in the life of the Church and capital, Prime Minister Gordon Brown held a Reception 'In Honour of the Global Day of Prayer' at No10 Downing Street on May 7<sup>th</sup> when he commended the initiative and the 'invaluable work of the churches in London'. Boris Johnson, newly elected London Mayor, asked to speak at the Millwall event to share his vision of how churches could work with him in stamping out gun and street crime and to ask for ongoing prayer support. [www.gdoplondon.com](http://www.gdoplondon.com)

## UK Report for Global Day of Prayer 2008

Gillingham, Kent: In the great hall of the Priestfield stadium about 550 people gathered. The Member of Parliament for Gillingham, Mr. Paul Clark, was once again in attendance, and publicly prayed for, as were the Council's Director of Children and Adults, the Station Commander of Kent Fire and Rescue Service, and the Chaplain of Medway Maritime Hospital, together with other local Councillors.

Buxton: Derbyshire. The celebration took place to mark the end of the third County Wide "Derbyshire Prayer Walk". The chairman of Derbyshire County Council was there to share issues for prayer, and to be prayed for by the Prayer Walkers and church leaders in the room, and then she herself prayed with great conviction for the various district councils and many parish councils in the County.

Northampton: An outdoor event based at the Bandstand in the town's main park. Lovely weather with 700/800 people attending. The event was opened by the Mayor who stayed right through.

Swansea, Wales: Around 600 people gathered in Castle Gardens, an open square in the centre of Swansea to pray for the world, the region and the city. Prayer for the city and region was helped by the presence of the Lord Mayor, the Chief Superintendent of Police and one of the father figures of the church in Swansea. Each addressed the gathering for a few minutes, before being prayed for and presented with a framed copy of The Swansea Declaration of Hope.

### **Praying for National and Global issues**

Every report talks about how prayer took place for the UK and for other nations facing crisis and war.

All felt it was a privilege to be part of what God is doing raising prayer around the globe. We pray on....

Jane Holloway

UK GDOP Co-ordinator [www.globaldayofprayer.co.uk](http://www.globaldayofprayer.co.uk)

(National Prayer Director, World Prayer Centre [www.worldprayer.org.uk](http://www.worldprayer.org.uk))