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The CORNERSTONE

The monthly newsletter of
New Kapporet & Christian Helpline UK
for our Listeners, Prayer Partners and Supporters

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit." (Ephesians 2: 19-22)

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**All contributors are identified by their
New Kapporet names and numbers.**

WELCOME

"It does exactly what it says on the tin." was originally a clever advertising slogan for a well-known wood sealant. The phrase has now entered into common usage and is widely understood as meaning that the claims of a product are not exaggerated, but accurate and true. The logo of New Kapporet not only shows the golden lid of the Ark of the Covenant, reminding us that this is a place where God is present to his people, it also claims that here you will find "Listening in the presence of Jesus."

When poor Thomas, forever known as 'doubting Thomas' because of his all-too-human refusal to believe without evidence, said to Jesus, "*Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way.*" Jesus replied, "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.*" (John 14: 5-6)

“No-one comes to the Father except through me.” This short phrase is so often used to deny the validity of, and even condemn, all non-Christian efforts to discover and relate to God. But these are not words of exclusion and condemnation. They are words of love and encouragement. Jesus is quite simply saying that he is the face of God turned towards humanity. All human attempts to discover the Father, at some point and inevitably, end up encountering the Son: *“Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.”* (John 14: 10-11)

Those who call our Christian helpline are not looking for comfort or support from us, the listeners and prayer partners. They know (or we should explain to them) that no relief or benefit is to be found in our wisdom or our advice. The solace they seek can come only

from one source, from the Lord Himself. Only He can relieve their pain and suffering or give them the strength to endure it for His sake.

If Jesus is not present, when we listen, then our listening is fruitless; it serves no other purpose than ‘tea and sympathy’. But if, when we listen, we keep our eyes fixed on Him, if we continuously remind ourselves that this wonderful ministry is not about us – but about Him alone, then we and our callers will experience His divine presence in every watch, in every call, in every loving response that we utter on His behalf. If we do this, then we can truly claim that “New Kapporet does exactly what it says on the tin.



Monthly News by Tim 2001

Last month I mentioned that a new training module was in preparation. This has now been finalised and incorporated in our Induction Training Programme. It is entitled ‘From Listening to Prayer’ and it forms Module 3 in our revised, 8-module programme. The module is focussed on prayer in the context of being a Listener with New Kapporet. Every trainee is, of course, already a Christian. Some have been so for a long time and many are very experienced at praying. Each one brings something unique to our Ministry – their own style, their own story, their own experience of prayer. We need to sustain and treasure that uniqueness, for our

callers are as diverse as our listeners, and the Lord tends to bring them together to suit his unique purpose. However, this new module is really about knowing when, how and what to pray, when listening to our callers. Although new recruits will henceforth experience the new module as part of their training, we hope it will prove immensely valuable to all of us and we plan to make it available to everyone in the coming months.

The other important innovation, which is in process of development, is a new ‘chaplaincy’, linked to our Ministry. New Kapporet is a

ministry of listening and prayer. We promise not to evangelise or preach to our callers, except perhaps to confess our own faith. Nonetheless, we appreciate that some callers may seek a greater understanding of the Good News of Jesus Christ. In our first year, we recognised that we needed to signpost such callers to other individuals or organisation outside of our ministry. However, we are now richly blessed with many listeners and prayer partners, who have a deep understanding of Holy Scripture and a wonderful ability to explain the Good News to others. So, we are now in the process of setting up our own chaplaincy team, to respond to those callers who are seeking greater understanding of the Christian faith. I will report on the progress of this initiative next month.

This past month has also seen the training of a number of new Watch Leaders, who can watch over and support our listeners on watch, especially when handling difficult or distressing calls. One of our core operational principles is that no listener should be on watch without having access to such support. It is, therefore, a great blessing that so many have stepped forward to take up these additional responsibilities.

We continue to offer significant support to a number of people, whom we call 'Supported Callers'. These are callers, often in great distress, who frequently contact the ministry and whose problems present as severe, complex and often long-term. Supported callers receive regular call-backs from listeners, who offer listening and prayer support founded on a deeper understanding of the caller's needs. A growing number of listeners are now involved in providing this more structured support and this is yielding great blessings, not only on the callers but also on the Listeners concerned and the wider ministry.

So, we continue to innovate and develop as we see the Lord leading us. We try never to forget that this is His ministry not ours. Long may He direct and guide our steps and long may we have the insight, courage and endurance to keep up with His leading.

God bless us all.

There is a Balm

There is a Balm in Gilead
That soothes a weary soul,
Covering all shame and fear
Making mind and body whole

God the greatest Physician
Healer comforter closest friend
Banishing all our Sickness
Lifting us on to our feet again

Holy Spirit rushing winds
Reviving fire burning inside,
His word of life sung over us,
Comforting arms open wide.

Your Balm a salve upon our hearts
Restoring us with your golden rain
Saturating every single part
Until wholeness and Joy remain

There is a Balm in Gilead,
Calmness to a troubled mind,
Jesus, healer of all our diseases
His love is patient merciful and kind.

Amen

By Stephanie 2046

Healing Hands by Lesley 2016

I wanted to share this story of healing with you because I think it is relevant to our ministry. (Spoiler alert... The punchline is that we only have to approach our listening watches with a desire to be Jesus to the callers, and He will do the rest!)

I trained to be a nurse late in life and although I love all things medical my main motivation was so that I could share Jesus with people.

Once, when I was a student, I visited a lady in her home who had chronic leg ulcers. They were bad, very bad!! So bad that she was awaiting an appointment for skin grafts. My mentor asked me to take down her bandages and wash her legs (with her feet in a bowl of water) As I did so the patient said to me "*Ooooh, you are just like the Lord Jesus*" (obviously just meaning that I was washing her feet) but it made my day and I thought 'Yes, *that is just what I want to be, I want to be the Lord Jesus to my patients.*'

I told myself that, when I saw her next, I would tell her how much that comment had blessed me and encouraged me, and how that was just what I wanted to be. I had it all worked out in my head...she was either a Christian and we would have a lovely conversation, or she wasn't and I would share the gospel and pray for her, and she would be healed!!

We revisited within a few days. My mentor forgot something, so had to go back to base while I repeated the leg washing (We are not allowed to talk about faith, so being left there on my own was amazing, I had the floor!) so I told the patient how much I had been blessed etc. and awaited her reply..

She said "*Of course, I come from a long line of agnostics and I think everybody should keep*

their religion to themselves" hmmm...not what I'd planned! I finished off and we got her legs wrapped up and left.

I never saw her again. However, over the next few days in the office, I heard the other nurses discussing how her legs were so much better - unbelievably better! One even said it was *miraculous*! So much better that when the hospital phoned with her skin graft appointment. They were told that she didn't need it anymore. She had been healed! Yes, I believe God had healed her.

I have often pondered this experience:

- How it did not go according to *my* plan but according to God's.
- How the lady did not even believe in Him.
- How he chose to heal her just because he did.
- How He did not get the glory for it.

But what I took from it was that if my heart's desire is to be Jesus to people then I will be! I can be me and do my bit, and I can let God be God and do what He will!



Random Thoughts at the Hauptbahnhof

by Liz 2021

“For there will never cease to be poor in the land; that is why I am commanding you to open wide your hand to your brother and to the poor and needy in your land.”

Deuteronomy 15:11

Waiting for the Number 4 to roll its way into the tram station where I live in Leipzig, Germany, I was struck by the sight of a young man as he made his way along the platform and how subtly dismissive we can all be when we see people such as this, shuffling along, for whatever reason has brought them to that point. As I watched him, I saw beyond the exterior to the newborn baby he once was, just as my son had been, and how if that was how my own son had ended up, how heartbroken I would be. God's heart breaks every time he sees such as these - the father's heart for His children like my mother's heart for mine. The experience and the writing has led me to more intentionally pray for all those poor shufflers in life as I see them pass me by, knowing how they were once new born babes and how God



still sees them as He watched them formed in the womb and born into this world.

You struggle unsurely from the seat beside me on bowed and unsteady legs, clutching vodka and beer bottle in one grubby hand, palmed roll-up pinched between black-nailed thumb and forefinger of your other hand. All around, the world hustles: over-stretched lives crowded onto over-filled platforms, stern purpose written into every weary line of every grey face as they ooze like silt from the tram. Everyone is going somewhere - except you.

Whose son are you? Did anyone smile on you, the day you first focused your innocent eyes on this world? Did anyone swaddle you in love and protection the day you were born and did anyone teach you to beam a baby's wide mouthed delight at the world as you watched, open-eyed and alive with curious amazement? Did your mother ever take the time to look you in the eye and whisper sweet words of gentle love to you, to make you smile and laugh - or did she fail to let you know that you even mattered to her? If you ever did.

When did you learn that you were on your own? Was it before or after the final descent into drink, drugs, or crime that was the beginning or the end - or perhaps the beginning of the end. Now the only hope is to numb the pain of the endless, useless hours in each day, waiting for nothing and no one.

You. You are someone's son. You, with a name unknown and no place to go. You didn't ask for this. You were born on a day like everyone else on this sad piece of earth, with an entire life ahead of you as a welcome gift. And I think, as I watch this defeated, shuffling form on the scrap heap of humanity, what if he was MY son? This empty shell of a life, folded in on himself like the worn and attered sides of the box on which he sleeps, lurches down the platform but surely is as precious and worthy of love as my own son and as

valuable as each and every person here who moves away in quiet condemnation.

Where are you heading now? What will you do with your evening, with your tomorrow and tomorrow's tomorrow that will become yesterday again as each sun rises and sets on a life marked off in street corner bins and empty bottles.

I pray you will somehow come to know love, dear boy. That somehow in the numbness and blur of a life without hope, something of a Father's love will reach out and touch your soul again - whoever you are and wherever you are going.

Seeds for the Harvest

By Sian 2031

As part of my church's home groups, we have been studying Mark. I was given Mark, Chapter 4, a parable we all know very well.

We can all relate to the different soils, whether as listeners or Callers.

The first seed falls on the stony path where the birds peck at them, like people who have hard hearts and closed ears. They refuse to listen to the ways of the Lord. Callers that have strayed from church, yet maybe lost, lonely, depressed.

The second seed falls on shallow, rocky soil, like people who play lip service to the teachings of Jesus and, when the going gets tough, they get going. They attend church on a Sunday but don't follow Jesus the rest of the week. Callers who have lost their way, forever trying to find a church to suit them.

"So that they maybe ever seeking but never perceiving. Ever hearing but never understanding. Otherwise, they might turn and be forgiven." (Mark 4:12)

The third seed falls on thorny ground. This like those that hear the word but life gets in the way, every day worries. The heart is true, but life is too complicated. Callers whose lives are

so hectic whether with work commitments, family worries, debt etc.

"He who has Ears to hear, let him listen!"
(Mark 4:9)

Finally, the seed that falls on good soil, hears the word and accepts it. These people listen, understand, and go and spread the word. They have a heart to listen. Will you listen & heed God's Word? Will you let the seed take root in your heart?

Personally, I see myself as the seed that falls on thorny ground. Life becomes overwhelming with anxieties, work commitments, everyday worries. I want to listen more to Jesus, but life gets in the way. Though, if I'm honest, I have been all four soils during my lifetime. As listeners, we always have to keep an open mind, we are on watch to listen, not to preach, to be there as God is always there, even when we feel lost, perhaps especially when we feel lost.

Often during my watch, I will spend time with The Word, The Bible, reading it, absorbing it, learning to understand it, knowing that this will benefit my physical, emotional, mental health as well as spiritual needs.

Another bible verse which sums it up is:

"This is what the Kingdom of God is like:

A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts & grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces corn, first the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts in his spike because the harvest has come.”
(Mark 4: 26-29)

We, as Listeners, are there, ready for the call, ready for the harvest that New Kapporet has planted!



Being a Prayer Partner

By Laura 2054

Hi everyone, my name is Laura, and I joined the family of New Kapporet as a prayer partner last year, as I was unable to commit to three hours at set times each week, due to working full time as a priest in the Church of England. What I could become, however, is a prayer partner. Each week a list of the callers (anonymised to save identity and for safeguarding reasons) is sent to us with a brief summary of the issues that our callers ring in with. We also get prayer requests too from the listeners when they have any issues themselves.

Each prayer partner is different, but I bring these people before God in prayer each day and I pray that the Holy Spirit may break through and touch each person with healing, reconciliation and love. The Lord knows the person intimately. So, He knows what is needed and what the situations are. I simply pray on their behalf. Even if they have no faith themselves, it is important to intercede on their behalf and I pray too that they may come to know the Lord in their lives.

Some of the callers are regulars, so it's really lovely to see answers to prayers and a change in the person over the months. I also pray, 'Thy will be done', so some may not get the answers they wish for but what they actually need.

Often, we have no idea how the person who phoned up is in the long term, but we pray that their situations have improved and that the light of God has shone on their situation and their burdens have become lighter.

Praying and prayer ministry for the people who call in is an essential role within the team. We pray when the listeners are on shift in the evenings, holding people and praying the Holy Spirit will give them the words they need but, more importantly, the ears to listen to what the caller is really saying.

I would encourage you if you have a prayer ministry to join the team. It is the key to holding it all together, because only in God's love can this all be achieved, and after all, let's face it we all need prayer!

Notices

from Liz 2034

Daily Reflections:

I do daily reflections on Facebook. I have done the gospels of Matthew and Mark and a few other things, I start the gospel of Luke on 5th April, so if anyone would like to follow them (currently I put reflections on the NK supporters page as well) the page is going to be called 'Journeying through Luke 2021'. It won't be there until 5th April. Currently I am doing reflections on the page currently called 'Journeying towards Easter 2021'. A mixed bag at the moment.

Prayer Course:

We are starting the Prayer Course by Peter Greig of Lectio 365 and 24/7 prayer fame in the middle of May. If anyone would like to join us with a view to then taking it to their churches, we will be doing it on Thursday afternoons at 2pm. New Kapporet folk may like to join us anyway.

THE PRAYER OF FRANCIS

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love:
where there is injury, pardon:
where there is doubt, faith:
where there is darkness, light:
where there is despair, hope:
where there is darkness, joy.*

*Divine Master; grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled, as to console,
to be understood, as to understand,
to be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

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