

In Touch

An occasional magazine from Maidstone Road Baptist Church

Pray for the Awayday

Saturday 25th May 2013

Pray for North Korea



BMS World Mission is encouraging its supporters and others to join in praying for North Korea.

The organisation has launched Project Cyrus, which will be releasing prayer resources on the country over the next two years.

The initiative has been six months in the planning, and is particularly timely given escalating tensions in the region. North Korea followed a long-range rocket in December with a nuclear test in February. Earlier this month it warned its military is authorised to wage 'cutting-edge smaller, lighter and diversified' nuclear strikes against the United States. South Korea has now raised its alert level to 'vital threat' amid indications the North is preparing for a missile test.

Inspired by 1 Timothy 2: 1 -2 (Pray every way you know how... and especially for rulers and governments to rule well - The Message), it is named after the sixth century BC ruler Cyrus the Great, a Persian praised in the Jewish Scriptures for his liberation of the Jewish people from their Babylonian captivity.

'It is this spirit of benevolence and that Project Cyrus seeks to pray for in North Korea,' explained a statement on the BMS website. 'God loves North Korea deeply, yet few there know of his character as taught in the Bible.

'The Church is present in North Korea but kept very quiet whilst its political leaders teach an ideology of self-reliance and isolation from the nations called Juche. 'Will you partner with us in prayer for North Korea over the next two years?

'Will you pray for a new freedom in North Korea to allow believers to share the good news of Jesus without persecution?' The charity Open Doors estimates there are between 200,000 to 400,000 Christians in North Korea. An estimated 60,000 to 80,000 are in political prisons camps.

For more on Project Cyrus visit www.bmsworldmission.org/support-us/pray-with-us/project-cyrus

My Life with Jesus: Avril Mayhew

I was born in Ipswich in a little terraced house in a terrace which is now Tacket Street Car Park. It was opposite Tacket Street Church where my sisters went to church. We lived in a house next to my grandmother.

At the time I was born, I was premature and they didn't think I was going to survive, as babies weren't born in hospital then, but one of my aunts, Grace, had just accepted the Lord as her Saviour, and the Lord put it into her heart to pray for me until I accepted Him for myself.

Anyway Grace went into nursing and she was hoping to go on to the mission field and then we had the War and she was sent to the London Hospital. It wasn't until after the War that she went on to the mission field. She wanted to go to China but the Lord sent her to Africa. She went to Kenya and did 25 years, only coming home once every five years. I didn't see much of her but when I did, the first thing she used to say to me is "have you accepted the Lord as your Saviour?" This went on for several years until one day she said "you know, the Lord is coming again and only those that know Jesus as Lord and Saviour are going up to heaven, so you'll be left behind." My own thought was everyone flying up flying up into heaven, as I always had a bit of an imagination, would mean that there would be no-one left to feed me. She said this every time she came home so I got a bit hardened to it.

I used to go to the Methodist Sunday School but when I was 14 I thought I was too grown up as I had left school and started work. I had two groups of friends. The ones I went to Sunday School with and the ones I worked with.

I used to go out for walks Sunday afternoon because even though my family weren't Christians, we weren't allowed to play as that's how it used to be years ago. I was out for a walk one lovely Sunday afternoon and the Lord said to me "are you going to choose?" I didn't want to choose anything. I said "well I believe in you Lord and I believe in the heavenly Father and I believe in the Lord, so what difference should that make to me?" Anyway He kept niggling me so I thought I would settle it one way or another. I said "if I go to church and they accept me as a Sunday School teacher, then I'll follow Your way, otherwise I'll go my own way. I went to the Methodist Sunday School Primary Leader then, and my friends were in the primary teaching and I said "I want to come and be a teacher." "Well " she said, "you don't just walk in and become a teacher; you have to be trained. But you can come in and help." That took the wind out of my sails as I thought she would reject me. I had to go into the prep class on a Tuesday evening and I was just helping for a long while, and then I started teaching. I had to buy myself a Bible as I only had a New Testament.

My friends used to go to church on a Sunday evening so I started going with them. We used to have a Minister every few years because our was a mission based in a Nissen hut. It's now a lovely church building, Landseer Road Methodist Church. But then it was a Nissen hut, but it was full of people.

They sent a young man for a year – his mother lived in Felixstowe actually. He had already done a year at Spurgeon's College and he went back to college after his time with us. He was most extraordinary as he was only in his 20s – he both preached and lived his sermons. There are more people saved through living it than all the sermons in the world.

I only met one other person who lived like that, our Sunday School Superintendent Mr Noble. He was a marvellous old man. He was in the Sunday School until he was 90 all the children loved him and the teachers did too. He prayed for every child and every teacher and he was a really genuine man and I saw a difference in his life. Nothing was too much trouble for him – not just for people in the church but for people on the estate. He practically filled the church because people came because he was always there for them. My brother had an accident – he was on a bike and he went under a bus and taken to hospital. Mr Noble offered to do my mother's shopping for her and take my baby sister in her pram too, so she could stay home waiting for any news from the hospital. Nothing was too much trouble for him and I began to think this man's got something I haven't. He lives different to what I do and I began to realise I wasn't as much of a Christian as I thought I was.

At this point we had a witness evening at the church and they were giving people practical things to do to help but I wasn't given anything because I can be very clumsy. This upset me and I went home and prayed " Lord I'm no good, you don't want me because people won't let me do anything. However the next morning was Sunday, and Mary, who was supposed to do the prayer in the evening had laryngitis and they were looking for volunteers to do the prayer. I volunteered. I was told that I needed to write it down so the minister could see what I was going to pray. Now I was not very good at spelling so Mary said copy one down. So I did and took it Sunday night. When he looked at it he said I should change this and that, and I felt the Lord was laughing with me because it was a Bishop's prayer! I got up to do the prayer and I was so nervous that I just couldn't read it. So I said quietly to the Lord "Help me". Suddenly I felt very calm and the Lord saying to me "I'll do the prayer". So I just prayed what came into my head. When I opened my eyes I saw everyone staring at me and the minister said. "That was a nice prayer." After that I was often asked to take a prayer. I had said to the Lord "I've got no talent." But He said "You have one now."

I married a country man and we went to live out at Coddendam and went to a little church there. We then moved to Levington eventually and I went to the small village church but didn't like the chanting so it was suggested that I go to the local Baptist chapel. My boys went to the Sunday School and I was asked to help Doreen who is Win's sister. I also went to the Women's Fellowship which was called the Sisterhood then. They also knew that I could do the prayers so I helped with that. One Anniversary, there was no-one to play the organ so the Minister, Michael Ball did. He was asked to do the prayer but he couldn't because he was playing so they asked me. I didn't have anything prepared but I did it. Afterwards Michael said "have you ever thought about going our speaking Avril?" I said "I'm no speaker. I've only ever done Sunday School, that's different." he said, "I think you can. I feel it's something you can do." So I got booked to speak at the Women's Meeting. So I spoke. In the place where we met, there was an old stove boiler and we used to put the kettle on before the speaker began so it would be ready to make a cup of tea at the end. Unfortunately I only spoke for 6 minutes so we had to sing hymns until the kettle boiled!

My Aunt Grace came home and she was asked to come and speak at the Women's Meeting and and I had to chair the meeting. When Grace got up to speak said "Before I speak about my work I would like to tell you something that happened years ago about my niece." I thought "what's coming out now!" She said about how the Lord had convinced her how He wanted me to serve Him and she was to pray for me until I accepted Him as Lord and Saviour. She said "this afternoon I have seen all my prayers answered, because at one time I wondered if they would ever be answered."

I was at Levington for over 14 years and at the church for about 13 years. One day Michael said "I see that you're not a member here." So I said "I'm not a Baptist, I'm a Methodist." He said "well, you're not a very good Methodist; you've been coming here for the last 13 years!" So that's how I became a member of a Baptist Church.

1974 was a bad year for my family. My younger brother was killed in a road accident. At that time my husband had also had a stroke and I had to go up to the hospital to tell him, so that was an ordeal. My favourite hymn was "What a friend we have in Jesus" and particularly the motto "take it to the Lord in prayer." At this particular time, the Lord gave me strength and courage. It was also at this time that my son David started to come to church because he saw the way that I handled it, and it was something that he didn't have. Michael still isn't in the church but David goes to River of Life. We had a tied a house and we had to move out and it meant that we had to go back and forwards to court to get a house as my husband's stroke meant he could no longer work. Eventually the Lord answered our prayers again, and we got the house in Felixstowe that we live in now.

Our Minister then was Alan Thomas and he asked me whether we were going back to the Methodists or stay with the Baptists. I knew the Baptist Church at Maidstone Road as I had been to speak at the Women's Meeting. Alan said that there was a new Minister at MRBC, Ron Rivers and he was going to the Induction: would I like to come? So that's how I started to come to Maidstone Road. I started to come in 1975 and was eventually baptised.

I helped in the Sunday School and then I helped with the flowers and joined the Women's Fellowship. In 1977 Russell died and went out to work as a Home Help. I retired when I was 61 because they changed the system to Home Carers and my sons didn't want me to go out working at night putting people to bed and so I had to resign. I didn't have enough pension. I was told that I wouldn't get any more. My sister suggested that I sent everything up to the DHSS in Newcastle. What I really needed was an extra £13 a week and I had been praying about it. The DHSS discovered that I had been underpaid for years and they owed me £700 and also I was entitled to a full pension which meant an extra £13 a week. "Thank you, dear Lord," I said "that's just what I needed!" I believe that the Lord always answers prayer.

Another of my favourite hymns that we sing at the Women's fellowship is *All the way my Saviour leads me, what have I to ask beside? Can I doubt His tender mercy who through life has been my guide?* So this is my witness to that.

What's your story? Whether it's how you became a Christian, or what God is doing in your life right now, please encourage others with it. Do talk to your small group leader or one of the Leadership Team about how you can share your story with others, so that we may praise God together for His grace.



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Check out the Website

www.mrbcfelixstowe.org.uk