



The whole church for the whole nation for the whole year

17 December 2007

Dear Church Leader,

Many of you will already be familiar with the national initiative, Hope 2008, which has been endorsed by Church Leaders nationally and here in Devon. At its heart, Hope 08 is about making Jesus known through positive involvement in our communities. It is about Christians uniting to love and serve people in the name of Jesus through coming alongside our neighbourhoods, listening to their needs and working in partnership with others. Although it is a national initiative supported by many denominations and agencies, it depends on churches taking grassroots action in their own localities. Although, the focus is on 2008, the underlying desire is that the impact and outreach of Hope 2008 will continue through 2009 and beyond. The Hope 08 vision is for a whole year of mission, in which churches unite to do more in the communities they serve and to make Jesus known both in word and deed.

Churches Together in Devon is working with its member churches to encourage and enable congregations across the county to plan Hope activities. Earlier this year we sent a copy of the Hope resource book to every Churches Together group in the county we know about. If your group did not receive one please get in touch with us. The resource book gives a wealth of ideas for serving our communities and proclaiming Jesus.

Here in Devon, we are exploring other ways in which we can help the county's churches to be a part of Hope 2008. We have developed our ideas around the "Hope High Points" and are listed below:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Fresh Hope | New Year - we encourage churches to meet together to pray for their communities and outreach. |
| Big Hope | Easter - use the Hope resource book for new ideas to mark Easter.
8 to 12 April - FNXtra - worship, teaching, fun and mission for young people. It will take place in and around Exeter with the aim of helping young people get involved in mission where they come from later in the year. |
| Hope where you live | 3-5 May - offering acts of kindness and practical service to our communities. What is needed in your community?
24 to 26 May - Big Cream Tea - offer a free cream tea wherever and however you wish to your community. |
| Hope Explored
Gift of Hope | September - arrange an enquirers course.
Christmas 08 - we are working on an exciting county wide initiative. More details next year! |

With this mailing, you will find some resources to help you pray for our communities this New Year's Eve or whenever you can. Included are a call to prayer for Hope 08 activities issued by the Devon Church Leaders and a copy of the Hope national declaration. We have also enclosed a resource for organizing an hour of prayer on New Year's Eve that has come from an ecumenical prayer fellowship in Yorkshire.

Many churches are already involved in planning Hope activities and there are some exciting ideas being suggested around the county. We have included a form with this mailing for you to let us know what you are planning where you are. It is not too late to plan Hope activities and as Hope encourages us to engage in mission in and beyond 2008, it may be that some of your ideas may not come to fruition until next year. We intend to share Hope stories with Devon's churches and with the local media. Please return your forms to Churches Together in Devon, 1 Albert Terrace, Princetown, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 6QP or e-mail to staylor921@aol.com.

To identify your church with Hope 08, you may want to take up an idea developed by Churches Together in Plymouth. They are offering durable signs to city churches with the wording "Hope in Plymouth" using the Hope logo and font as in the image at the top of this letter. They cost £40 each and are 3 foot by 2 foot in size on a white background. These can be offered to other places in the county with either the wording "Hope in Devon" or with the name of your settlement. You can use the Hope website (www.Hope08.com) to create your own Hope logo or Churches Together in Devon can help you do it. Please would you contact Lindi Ching at the Diocese of Exeter on 01392 294930 or lindi.ching@exeter.anglican.org if you are interested in purchasing one of these signs.

Finally, much interest has been expressed in the Big Cream Tea planned for 24-26 May when we will be hoping that churches across the county will offer a free cream tea as an act of kindness to their neighbourhood. It will be launched at the Devon County Show in May and further resources will be available next year for how you might organize it in your area.

I do hope that you have a joyous Christmas and that in 2008 we can all be part of the churches doing more together in word and deed to make Jesus known.

Yours in Christ,



Churches Together in Devon

Signed on behalf of the Devon Hope co-ordinating Group

