

One was about the man's gun and how it had changed from being his friend to being his enemy; how he had become entrapped in a cycle of ever increasing violence that he could not escape from until he eventually shot and killed someone. Another man wrote about God in the most beautiful way and I remember thinking, 'I wish I could write like that about God'. He also spoke of his wife and children and how he wished he could see them more. It was only later when filling in the prison records I found out he was a terrorist, responsible for an appalling atrocity.

I think it was then that I explored what Thomas Aquinas meant with his writings on Imago Deo more fully. What does it mean to be made in the image of God? If these inmates are made in the image of God, how should I respond? I thought of the way Jesus showed love and respect to those on the margins of society. I reflected on how his actions were about bringing people back into community and helping them be accepted. Whilst in the past I had felt a mixture of emotions about those in prison, I stopped lumping all inmates together and tried to see the individual – someone loved by God; someone who could show me something about God and the miracles of transformation.

Since then I have tried to listen to stories; stories of lived-experience before reaching any conclusions about people. Each person is unique; each person's story shapes them. In the words of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, writing about salvation.

All need to be saved

All can be saved

All can know they are saved

All can be saved to the uttermost

And that includes me, you and everyone else.

Contact us at: GMCC Methodist Central Buildings Oldham Street M1 1JQ

Telephone: 0161 236 2462 Email: [chaplain@gmcconline.org](mailto:chaplain@gmcconline.org)

Please make cheques payable to: **GM Prison Prayer**  
and state if you would like to **Gift Aid it**

**Check out our Facebook Page or [www.gmccsupport.org](http://www.gmccsupport.org)**

**HMP MANCHESTER; HMP FOREST BANK; HMP BUCKLEY HALL;  
HMP & YOI STYAL; HMP YOI THORN CROSS & HMP HINDLEY**

**GREATER MANCHESTER COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY**

**PRISON PRAYER LETTER NOVEMBER 2023**

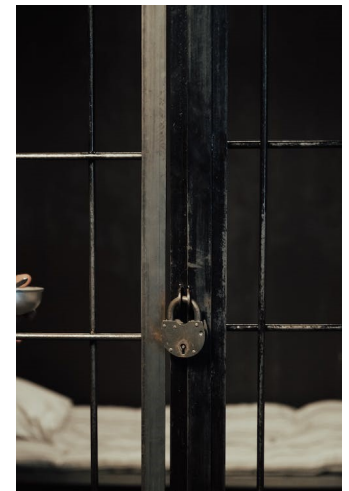
***This months article was written by Deacon Jenny who joins us at Manchester Central Hall and as a GMCC Trustee***

The last few weeks have sped by as I have started to learn about the incredible work taking place in Manchester Methodist Central Hall. I am the latest in a long history of deacons serving in this building, whose heartbeat is about social justice.

Before coming to Manchester, I have served as a deacon in Leeds and Nottingham city centres, working alongside the homeless and marginalized. When I read the Scriptures, I cannot help but wonder why the church still has a tendency to exclude, rather than include, those whose life experiences are very different.

One of the most profound experiences of my life was when I was in ministerial training and went on placement to the chaplaincy at HMP Belmarsh. Having never been into prison before and having led a fairly sheltered life, I was surprised at the long security checks anyone entering the prison needed to undergo. The noise of keys, doors and gates seemed louder than I imagined; the guards escorting inmates everywhere; the nets and wires over any open spaces to avoid contraband, drones or even helicopters entering this protected place made me begin to understand a bit about what prison really meant, and felt like, to those who were confined there.

As part of my placement, I had been asked to help out with a creative writing group. Some of the pieces written by those attending still move me today.



## NOVEMBER 2023

- 1 A who is waiting for a parole hearing, pray for favour and the right outcome
- 2 G who is growing in his faith and sharing it openly, pray for open hearts and minds
- 3 N who is hoping to reach more people with the gospel, pray for favour and open doors
- 4 C who is learning more about Christ but is still undecided, pray for clarity and hope
- 5 The Alpha course at HMP Manchester, pray that eyes are opened to the truth of Christs love
- 6 E who is finding it hard to accept help that is desperately needed, pray for the right person to get through to him and make positive changes
- 7 C who had been suffering with ill mental health, pray for healing and restoration
- 8 A who is anxious about the health of his father, pray for the right support, hope and peace
- 9 The Chaplaincy department at HMP Forest Bank who support those in their care so well, pray for continued blessings and provision
- 10 S who has is waiting for a hospital appointment, pray for peace in the waiting and favour in he process
- 11 E who is struggling with bad eyesight, pray for healing and the right intervention
- 12 P who is hoping for permanent housing after prison, pray for miraculous provision
- 13 The staff at HMP Manchester who continue to work hard throughout the year, pray for their safety and that they are blessed
- 14 M who is struggling with dark thoughts, pray for support and healing
- 15 GMCC volunteers who continue to give their time and expertise to the charity, pray that they are safe and blessed

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- 16 L who has started a new job after years of searching, pray that he continues to do well and thank God for the blessing
- 17 A who is working through traumatic experiences, pray that they know Gods peace during the healing process
- 18 Mental Health sessions at GMCC, pray that these sessions continue to help our clients see who God has created them to be
- 19 C who is the sole carer for his wife, pray for support and provision
- 20 Women attending the Sycamore Tree Course. Prayers that the right women would apply and that they would be able to attend for all six sessions, prayers of blessing for the volunteers from Prison Fellowship who run the course
- 21 Our new GMCC Trustee who is a great addition to the team and supports us, pray she is blessed
- 22 M who has struggled with drugs for many years to be free from this problem, pray for the right intervention and support
- 23 The resettlement officer at HMP Styal who works tirelessly to try to ensure that our women are released in to safe and secure housing which is always difficult. Pray that God would bless and encourage him
- 24 That J who has kept out of trouble and tried hard to better himself will succeed, pray for the right support and people.
- 25 Healing for A whose alcohol problem is dragging her down and affecting her family, pray for the right people to intervene
- 26 The Tuesday Group at GMCC to grow in numbers and effectiveness, pray for a move of God in the services
- 27 R who has been isolating himself more and more, pray for healing and peace
- 28 For renewed contact with those with whom we have lost touch, pray for opportunities to reach out and open hearts
- 29 For M that as his release date gets closer, he will be ready for a fresh start, pray for all he needs to be in place
- 30 Pray for prison Chaplain as they prepare for the often complicated Christmas and New Year Period, pray for wisdom and compassion