



Basingstoke Town Chaplaincy

Newsletter August 2020

Message from the Trustees

With the arrival of Covid-19 we have all had to make a lot of adjustments in many aspects of our lives. For many people it has been difficult - wanting to go about our normal business, but being unable to meet with friends or relatives, or just feeling weary stuck at home. St Paul tells us to be content in all situations, but that did not stop him pushing at boundaries. Rather, he knew he was doing God's will, and that God was in control of His creation in general, and Paul's own mission in particular.

Since the lifting of some restrictions, several Chaplains have felt called, and able, to provide a service in the streets of the town. So, we teamed up with Street Pastors, and for the past several weeks pairs of Chaplains have been walking about and meeting people. They have done what we are all learning to do - keep our distance whilst meeting others and being sociable. And the responses have been positive, with much general conversation, but also a few people who are lonely or anxious and have issues they want to talk about. Often all that is needed is to listen, perhaps provide practical information, or offer to pray. Some ask for prayer directly. In this way, a Christian presence brings God into their lives.

Those working in the town have all the challenges that we face, along with other specific ones that are real now, or looming in the near future. Shop workers are on low wages and many shops are struggling for customers. Staff are expected to cover more aspects of running the shop and there is the possibility of closure due to lack of profitability. We are ready to listen to people with these concerns and perhaps point them to where they can find help.

Practicalities

At the Chaplaincy we are making the necessary adjustments in order to remain supportive of people. And we could not do that without the valuable support we receive from individuals and churches. We thank God for all of your help; whether by prayer or financial support, you contribute to God's mission through the Chaplaincy. Thank you!

We have had some necessary extra expenses lately, so we would welcome any additional financial support you can offer us. Some of the churches which usually donate to the Chaplaincy are struggling financially themselves, so we are praying for new supporters to provide sufficient funds for us to operate.

Sharing what we do

We would very much like to share what we are doing with church members, and we can provide a speaker for any meeting. You are also invited to come and see what we do. The Chaplains walk around for an hour or so in pairs, and you are very welcome to join them. There would be no need to contribute anything to conversations unless you wanted to, and you would always be guided by the Chaplain. There is also no commitment - just come along and see what happens, so you can pray with knowledge of what actually goes on.

Prayer support

Chaplains and Trustees meet regularly on line to support one another and pray. We have set out a new prayer diary to reflect the current situation, and we hope you will continue to support us in prayer as well.

Prayer Diary

Day 1	Pray for the Chaplains who will be out and about, that God will lead them to people and inspire them with the right words to say.
Day 2	Pray for the traders in the market and those working in the Top of the Town. Many shops are small businesses and need the trade to keep going. Also pray for people who linger in that area and those who help provide a safe environment.
Day 3	Pray for people in those places we are unable to visit at present: BCoT, the police offices, the Magistrates' Courts and Age Concern. Each has many challenges to face and difficult decisions to make about operating safely.
Day 4	Pray for those involved in making the Chaplaincy happen – Libby our administrator, the Trustees, and all the links we have with Festival Place and other organisations. For vision to provide the right service in changing circumstances. Thank God for all who support this ministry in prayer and giving.
Day 5	Pray for those working in the town centre shops Discovery Centre and offices.
Day 6	Pray for bus and taxi drivers, those providing cleaning and safety services, charity advice and support workers. Also, that arrangements for Platform Pastors might be completed.
Day 7	Pray that we will be a blessing to others and that people will be drawn to the God who cares for them and wants a relationship with them.

Suite 1, Paddington House, Festival Place, Basingstoke, RG21 7LJ

<http://www.basingstoketownchaplaincy.org.uk/>

01256 842232

Basingstoke Town Chaplaincy Trust, Registered Charity no: 1160005

