



Chaplaincy Prayer Letter Autumn 2022

A recent Anglican prayer for the day begins: “Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you..”

Salman Rushdie said: ‘I don’t have a God, but I have a God-shaped hole inside of me’, and many people concur with him. We do seem to have been made that way so we are all seeking after God, which these days is often expressed as 'being spiritual but not religious'.

Churches do a good job inviting people to meet with God through their many varied activities. There are regular and special services conducted along with playgroups, foodbanks, events and courses.

Chaplains in the town have a supplementary role in meeting others and engaging with people who are not considering God in their lives but who want to talk about issues they have. Especially in the last three years people seem much more open to discussing their lives and are willing to think about God and whether He cares about them.

Chaplains are open about their faith and wear a uniform, which people find reassuring. Many conversations begin as polite engagements which then lead to trust and greater openness. By being friendly and interested in other people Chaplains are able to listen with concern as people unburden themselves. They can help them put their life and concerns into context, consider their options and maybe offer suggestions which might help. Chaplains are not founts of all knowledge but empathise and can often signpost people to where more help is available. This could include referring people to a local church; we are looking to strengthen links with local

churches. We also offer to pray for people, or even pray with them; the invitation is usually welcomed.

Conversations are confidential so we cannot share too much. However, we can say that we are made very welcome in many shops in town, at the Magistrates' Court and elsewhere and we have got to know people by meeting them regularly in the streets.

If your church or fellowship would like someone to speak about the Town Chaplaincy, we would be delighted to do so. At a Sunday service we are happy to give a 5 minute introduction and then talk afterwards to anyone interested in learning more. Just send an email or leave a phone message to arrange it!

The prayer continues "pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself". May that be a prayer for ourselves and also for others, that all may know the peace that God gives us through Jesus Christ.

John

John Hayward

Chair of Trustees

Prayer Points

Your prayers are valued for:

- casual meetings, which God seems to engineer, to enable Chaplains to speak to people in their need.
- the regular visits we make.
- There are more opportunities to engage with people than we can manage so we need more help.
- The death of Her Majesty has led to conversations about faith, loyalty and death.
- Christmas will provide more opportunities to talk about God's initiatives of love.
- Some of our oldest Chaplains have retired after several years of service.
- We are blessed with good offices in the town centre and would be grateful for prayer that our office lease agreement can be renewed with the rent set at an affordable level.



Basingstoke Town Chaplaincy

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