



Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy

*Providing pastoral and spiritual support
to those who work in or visit
Luton Town Centre*

July 2014 - Issue number 15

Welcome to our newsletter. Please feel free to copy or print out further copies, or email the electronic version to share with your friends and churches.

New Faces

We are delighted to welcome two new faces to the Chaplaincy Lawrence Fagbayi has already been fully trained and has started connecting with people at the Magistrates' Court. Ian Rowlands has become a Trustee of the charity. His knowledge of Luton and his leadership of ATP Media will be invaluable as LTCC continues to develop. Sadly, we have said 'Goodbye' to Gerry McGrogan who has retired from the Board of Trustees. Gerry was one of the founding trustees and we are so grateful for his contribution to the Chaplaincy over the years. We wish him well as he tries to take things a bit easier!!



Lawrence

Ian

Last week I had a very positive conversation with a defendant who was clearly upset in the waiting area but opened up to me and then we prayed and she had her answer to prayer within about 5 seconds of the Amen!

Court Chaplain

New Places



At the beginning of April we left our offices in Wesley House (which is now being converted into student accommodation) and moved across the road to AW House in Stuart Street where we have been made very welcome by a very friendly and efficient management team. Having spent a couple of months in Suite 7, we have now moved downstairs to Suite 11 which is just off the main reception area, giving much better access for our visitors. We have also been able to hold our Trustees' meetings in the Conference Suite and are feeling very much at home. You are welcome to call in and see us at any time—just give us a call to make sure someone is there!

Come and celebrate

We are in the process of planning our Annual Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving which this year will be held on Sunday 19th October, 6 30 pm at St Mary's Church, Church Street, Luton. We are delighted that Alan West, Pastor of Luton Christian Fellowship, will be speaking and there will be an opportunity to meet some of our Chaplains and hear about the exciting work they are doing in Luton. We'd love lots of you to come along and be encouraged so put the date in your diary!

Pioneers

Our Court Chaplains have the privilege of talking to many people in the courts—court staff, solicitors, victims, police, defendants, friends and families, as well as judges and magistrates. They get to hear some pretty harrowing stories and are able to give comfort to those in distress. Jurors at the Crown Court can expect to have a particularly hard time as they get to hear all the details of some gruesome cases but, due to the sensitivity of their role they are not allowed to discuss it with anyone so are not allowed access to our Chaplains during the case. In a pioneering initiative, Jurors at Luton Crown Court will now be given information about the Luton Court Chaplaincy Service in the pack they receive when they begin their duty, and there are posters up in the Jurors' area offering support once the case is finished. This has taken some careful negotiation and sensitivity and Courts in other towns are watching to see how it goes.

Numbers

We started collecting statistics on the number of 'significant conversations' our Chaplains were having at the beginning of the year. It has taken some teams time to get used to doing this, but even so, until the end of May we have recorded ...



...that's 626 significant conversations (so lasting more than just a few minutes) about issues such as bereavement, stress, work, family, health and mental health, drugs and alcohol, finance, distress and faith.

New Opportunities

ASDA

Following meetings and negotiations we have been given the opportunity to place a Chaplain in ASDA in Wigmore Lane, and also to place LTCC chaplains to work alongside David Alexander at Vauxhall. David, in addition to being one of our Town Hall chaplains, is the Workplace Matters chaplain at Vauxhall. The only problem is that we currently don't have enough chaplains! If you are interested in one of these placements, are a member of a local church and can spare at least 2 hours at the same time each week, please get in touch to arrange an informal chat with Michael.



Thank you

We have had a number of sizeable donations from local churches in Luton—we are so grateful for these—it is the support of the local church that keeps us going. Thank you also to all of you who make individual donations, and to the Barleycorn Trust who recently gave us a grant. With our move to AW House, we are now having to pay a commercial rent for our office and so our bank balance is suffering a bit. If you can make a one-off donation, or preferably make a small monthly commitment to the work of the Chaplaincy it would be very helpful! Our HSBC bank account details are

Sort Code: 403032

Account Number: 12307375

Account name: Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy

or you can find a form on our web-site under 'Get involved'.

We also welcome one-off donations and cheques should be made payable to 'Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy'. If you can Gift Aid your donation that's even better!

You can also give by going on-line to www.localgiving.com/lccc

Michael's diary

Training

March and April saw our latest group of Chaplains complete a Core Training Programme. This was also an opportunity for 'older' chaplains to have a refresher, and for everyone to get know other team members. We had excellent training in Listening Skills, Listening to God, Bereavement, Dealing with Stress, Understanding other cultures and Drug and Alcohol Awareness.

At the Depot

Michael continues to visit the LBC Depot each week and he is really seeing the fruit of this placement as he is receiving a number of personal referrals from managers for staff needing support.

"Long chat with 'y' about housing benefit arrears. Prayed with her and all is now sorted out. She said she had not believed in God before"

Town Hall Chaplain

Healing on the Streets

In May a good number of people attended a 'Refresher Day' for Healing on the Streets. This was also an opportunity for potential team members to come on board and receive training—so the team continues to grow.

"There was a palpable sense of God's presence there which a number of us felt - and so did a number of visitors to us. I felt a peace there I've not felt anywhere else!"

HOTS Team

Speaking

Since our last newsletter Michael has had the opportunity to speak at a number of groups and churches, including the Luton Advice Network, the Deanery Synod, Sight Concern Bedfordshire, Ramridge Baptist Church, St Mary's Church and St Nicholas' Harpenden. Please contact us if you would like Michael to come and speak.

Quilliam

Peter Adams, who works in the area of interfaith relations and peacebuilding in Luton, organised a meeting with Michael, Bishop Richard of Bedford and Usama Hasan from Quilliam (a counter-extremism 'think tank' who have worked closely with Stephen Lennon (Tommy Robinson) the former leader of the EDL). We talked about our respective roles in Luton, the positive relationships that have been formed in a range of communities, and looked at how we could work together more closely. It was a very positive meeting, and particularly timely, given the current situation in Iraq and the national news reporting that a Luton extremist has gone to fight there.

Luton Poppy Appeal

Michael joined with the Mayor, civic, community and faith leaders at the launch of the Luton Poppy Appeal where poppy seeds were planted in remembrance of all those who fought and died in armed conflicts. Michael also attended the Armed Forces Day 'Raising the Flag' event with other civic, community and faith leaders.



Pentecost Praise

Michael was invited to lead the intercessions for the local Christian agencies at this year's service.

Notice of our Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at 5 pm on Sunday 19th October at St Mary's Church, Church Street, Luton LU1 3JF

All are welcome to attend.