



Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy

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

July 2015 - Issue number 18

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 church members.

Michael meets the Archbishop of Canterbury



On Thursday 18th June the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, visited Luton. Beginning his visit at St Mary's Church, Michael then took the Archbishop through The Mall shopping centre, stopping to speak to retailers and members of the public on the way. As well as being introduced to other community and faith leaders at a reception at the Town Hall, the Archbishop also had the opportunity to meet and talk to some of our Chaplains.



Michael explained something of town centre chaplaincies and the Archbishop was very enthusiastic and declared the national initiative, the Alliance of Town and City Chaplaincies to be 'fantastic'!

A very modern ministry

In March the Theos Think Tank published a report looking at the development of Chaplaincy across the UK—using Luton as an excellent example of good practice. You can download the report by going to the 'News' section on the 'About us' page of our web-site—www.lutontcc.org.uk.

Come on and celebrate!

In September this year the Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy will have been 'operational' for five years! To mark this occasion you are invited to come along to a special service on **Wednesday 21st October at 7 30 pm** at True Vine on Park Street to thank God for what he has done, to hear stories from our Chaplains and to pray for the future of LTCC.

This year we will also be celebrating our anniversary by inviting some of our service users to a Reception at the Town Hall.

Training

Our next Core Training programme for our Chaplains will take place in the Autumn over three Saturdays—12th September, 10th October and 7th November.

If you are thinking about becoming a Volunteer Chaplain with us it would be great to chat to you before the summer so that you can join the training programme which covers issues such as bereavement, dealing with stress, listening skills, listening to God, understanding the culture, and drug and alcohol abuse.

Thank you to everyone who supports us financially and in prayer.

A new Trustee



Dave Page has joined the Board as our newest Trustee. Dave was born in Watford but now lives in Houghton Regis where, until recently, he was pastoring a church

for 22 years. He is a Quantity Surveyor by trade but now "does a rather odd job of a Claim's Consultant in the Construction Industry." (His description!)

Dave will be taking over the role of Treasurer from Yasmin Milligan, who has faithfully looked after the finances for LTCC since the start! Huge thanks go to Yasmin, who will remain a Trustee, for all her hard work over the years.

Serving the nation

In April around 80 people gathered together in Luton at a national conference 'Growing Chaplaincies to serve the nation' which marked the official launch of the Alliance of Town and City Chaplaincies. Speakers included Roy Monks, the Airport Chaplain for East Midlands Airport and part of the Elim team developing town chaplaincies across the UK. There was also a session on 'Challenges for Chaplaincies' and plenty of opportunity for networking and to ask questions about the development of town and city chaplaincies. Following the conference ATCC now has 23 members from across the UK with others in the process of signing up. With members as far afield as Essex, Somerset, Belfast and Birmingham it really is a 'national movement'.

Go to www.atccchaplaincies.org for more information.

*Town Centre Chaplain—Michael Campbell
Chair of Trustees—Mike Jones, St Mary's Parish Church, Church Street, Luton LU1 3JF*



Peace on the streets

LTCC chaplains were again asked to act as Community Mediators during a demonstration by Britain First in Luton in June. They were part of a town-wide community response to the demonstration which had the potential to disrupt trade in the town, as well as stir up divisions in our community. Community and faith leaders worked closely with Council and police to ensure that harmony was maintained on the day with the demonstration passing off peacefully.

Chaplains on Retreat

Our Chaplains work really hard and have to listen to some hard things—so it was good to be able to provide a day of refreshment and restoration for them as we went 'on Retreat' to the beautiful setting of the Faith Works Trust near Berkhamsted. The day was led by Graham Cleveland and focussed on spending time in the presence of God. Sharing lunch together also gave the opportunity for the Chaplains and some of the Trustees to get to know each other better - altogether a lovely day!

Michael's diary

Providing Bibles at the Crown Court, and occasionally giving them out at HOTS prompted a meeting with John Spurgeon and Tony Lovering from the Gideon's Bible Society. Gideon's have historically provided bibles to Chaplaincies in hospitals, prisons and the armed forces, however they now recognise that there are a whole range of new expressions of chaplaincies in the UK whom they would like to reach.

Having met with John and Tony, they have agreed to provide LTCC with a hundred Gideon Bibles and are hoping to change their policy in the future in order to provide all Town and City Chaplaincies across the UK with Gideon Bibles.

Plugging into the Power of God The Missionall Conference was held in March and was hosted by Stopsley Baptist church (SBC), in collaboration with Hope Church and St Hugh's, Lewsey. Simon Holley from The Kings' Arms Church, Bedford was the keynote speaker and LTCC was invited to lead a session on Healing on the Streets which tied in very well with the theme. Michael then took some of our established

team and new people out onto the streets in Stopsley. SBC is now considering taking a new team out onto the streets in their local area on a regular basis.

Coming up Michael will be attending the Luton Council of Faiths meeting which will address the difficult issues of the recent Britain First demo, Tunisian attacks, the local Luton family going to Syria and the ongoing work around extremism, its impact on Luton and how we should best respond.

He will also be attending a meeting of church leaders and the local authority looking at the serious issue of the high level of child poverty in Luton and how best to respond. It is likely that the level of poverty will rise with the imposed £12billion of cuts from government on the horizon. Potentially this could create a whole range of opportunities for the church to work in collaboration with the local authority, community and family centres.

Our little kitchen area that we share with the staff is proving to be a real blessing, as the staff all seem to open up to us when they come to make a cuppa.

Magistrates' Court

Christmas is coming (!) and Michael is already involved in preparations for the launch of this year's Christmas Prayer Tree in The Mall (Sunday 29th November). This year this will include a Carol Flash mob and rehearsals for this will begin in the Autumn—those wishing to take part should contact Michael.

If you would like to make a donation to the Chaplaincy—perhaps £10 to cover the cost of a Bible for the Court - then you can do this by sending us a cheque made payable to 'Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy', or by making a bank transfer using the following details:

Sort Code: 403032

Account Number: 12307375

Account name: Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy

You can also donate on-line at www.localgiving.com/ltcc, or by texting LTCC11(+ the amount—£2/£5/£10) to 70070.

We are especially grateful for regular donations (however modest) as these help us to plan.

Today before I had even unpacked my bag I had a conversation with a member of staff who had a phone call this morning to say that his close friend from school had died. He was obviously still in quite a lot of shock and needing to talk it through.

Town Hall Chaplain