

Belfast Street Pastors – FAQs on the Streets

FAQ

Street Pastors get asked loads of questions on the street. Here are a collection of the frequently asked ones.

What is a street pastor?

A street pastor is a Christian who cares about his/her community. We patrol the streets of Belfast between 10pm and 2am at the weekends to care, listen and help. We give out bottles of water and flip-flops and take care of anyone who is unable to look after themselves. We often help by making sure people get into safe transport home.

Are you religious?

That depends on what you mean by religious. All street pastors are Christians and are committed to local churches, but we tend not to see ourselves as religious. Religion is about following a set of rules in an attempt to please God, whereas the Christian faith is all about having a personal and living relationship with the creator of the universe.

Are you going to preach to me?

We do not go out on the streets to preach to anyone. We are simply out to care, listen and help. Many of the conversations that we have on the streets are about faith, but these are initiated by the people we meet. If someone wants prayer for example, we will happily pray with them, but will never force this on anyone.

What is a pastor?

The word pastor means someone who cares for someone else – in the same way that a shepherd would look after his sheep and keep them from harm.

What motivates you to become a street pastor?

Every one of the street pastors you will meet on the streets is there because he/she genuinely cares about Belfast and wants it to be a safer, better city. Each Street Pastor wants to express their faith in a practical and non-judgemental way.

What church do you come from?

Belfast Street Pastors do not just come from any one church, but our teams include people from a wide range of churches.

Do you work with the police?

We are entirely separate from the police and have a completely different role. We are not there to enforce the law or be informers for the police. Our role is to provide a listening ear and genuine care for anyone that needs (and wants) it.

How much do you get paid?

Street pastors are entirely voluntary. In fact, every street pastor pays something towards their uniform. The entire organisation is run by volunteers who willingly give up their time to serve the Belfast night-time community.

How are you funded?

Belfast Street Pastors has received funding from individuals, churches, Belfast City Council and the Police to get going and help towards training and equipment.

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How long has Street Pastors been running?

Belfast Street Pastors launched in May 2011, but the original UK initiative started in London in January 2003.

How can I become a street pastor?

All Street Pastors are Christians who are committed to a local church. If you are interested in becoming a street pastor then contact the Belfast Street Pastors coordinator:
belfast@streetpastors.org.uk.

Can I give you a donation?

We don't ask for money on the street, but do welcome support from different people. When we are registered as a local charity, we will be able to receive donations by text and through our web site.

Can I have a cheese and onion pasty?

If we carried any the answer would be yes.