



Cheltenham Street Pastors

The Church in action on the streets

News Sheet - Issue 9



Cheltenham Street Pastors 3rd Anniversary

Cheltenham Street Pastors celebrated their third Anniversary with a service at Bethesda Methodist Church in Cheltenham on Saturday 1st December 2012. The service was led by the Minister Rev Hilary Ewing who also gave the address. Speaking at the service the new Police and Crime Commissioner Martin Surl said, "Your work inspires me, the police and those you meet and help and you can make a real difference to young people. Thank you for your commitment, listening ear and practical help because the need will not go away". The service was also attended by Inspector Tim Waterhouse who is responsible for policing in the town centre. He congratulated Cheltenham Street Pastors on their 3rd Anniversary and thanked them for their work in the town. Music was lead by a group from Cheltenham Street Pastors and two Street Pastors gave testimonies about their work. One of these testimonies is on the back of this News Sheet.

Six Street Pastors Commissioned



Six new Street Pastors were commissioned at the third Anniversary Service at Bethesda Church on 1st December 2012. They were commissioned by Rev Steve Ward, Minister at Winchcombe and Bishops Cleeve Methodist Churches, who is himself a Street Pastor and is also Chaplain to Cheltenham Street Pastors. There are now 54 trained Street Pastors from 30 local churches who are out in teams on Friday and Saturday nights each week between 10.00 pm and 4.00 am.

Mayor Visits Street Pastors

The Mayor of Cheltenham Colin Hay joined a team from Cheltenham Street Pastors one night in November 2012 to experience at first hand their work on the streets of Cheltenham. The Mayor thanked the Street Pastors for their work in the town.



Monthly Prayer Meeting

A Prayer Meeting for the work of Street Pastors is held on the second Tuesday of each month at St Matthew's church in the town centre from 10.30 to 11.30 am.



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Testimony from Street Pastor Christine Wisdom

When you experience the trust of strangers – not once, but countless times;
When you see instant answer to prayer, not once but countless times;
When you have the support and fellowship of like-minded Christians, not once but countless times –
Then you know what a privilege it is to be a Street Pastor.

I did not come running to be a street pastor although I knew I was called to this service from the first time I ever heard about it. But – I did not want to be out on the streets in the night in all weathers. Walking around in the dark held no appeal for me. I was comfortable but God has a way of making you feel uncomfortable....He doesn't give up.....so eventually, as I sidled out of church one morning, I muttered to our then minister, reluctantly, that I was "interested in knowing more about street pastors". Very non-committal was that request. But, as I pointed out to God, I had asked...

If only you knew the objections I raised in conversations with God – the difficulties I put before him, the demolition jobs he did to get me into the training and, as one of the first group three years ago, out on the streets in my Street Pastor uniform.

If you had told me that I would pray on the streets, out loud,... initiate such prayer even – I would have run away faster than any Olympic medallist.

My total commitment to the power of prayer stems from this work – every street pastor will experience God at work before their eyes.

He walks with us, taking us time and again to where we are most needed; prodding us as it were, to go this way, to return that way, to find someone in distress. He provides solutions when we flounder...such as

The bus driver who got off his bus to say he'd keep an eye on a young girl passenger, who we'd walked to the bus, and see she was OK
Such as...The group passing by who recognise a fellow student and offer to take him or her home, or to go with them in a taxi before returning to go clubbing themselves;
Such as....The sympathetic paramedic, the helpful cab driver... so many people who amazingly arrive to help us when we need them most...

And it is fun. Often. Our fellow street pastors are great to be with. People come up to thank us for being there, for 'saving their lives last month', for helping their friends; they may know street pastors in other towns or relatives may be street pastors. They may want to know what we do, why we do it, how much we are paid... they may want to debate spiritual matters.... Every night is different and every night is worthwhile.

In this past three years I have gained more from being a street pastor than I could have ever envisaged. I have experienced three years of wonderful spiritual growth. It is the best thing that God could have steered me towards and I thank Him for it just as I thank Him for being allowed to serve him in this way. Praise be to God.