



## in Leeds

### LEEDS STREET PASTORS' NEWS – MARCH 2016

#### *Into the New Year*

*“Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him! Isaiah 30:18”*

Street Pastors extend blessing and prayers to all their friends and supporters. As they have become accustomed; in this first newsletter of 2016, Street Pastors take this opportunity to thank you, our family in Christ for your prayers and support throughout 2015. It is also our opportunity to reflect back and share with you how the Lord has continued to answer our prayers and to bless our work. Over 2016 we wait on the Lord and look forward to the revealing and unravelling of His plans.

#### **Again a big thank you!**

We continue to thank all those who have remembered us in your prayers over 2015. Every single one of your prayers were felt and answered; they covered us before, during and after our patrols. As you prayed, God kept his promises; He was there, kept us safe, filled our hearts and directed us to those who He had touched. Street Pastors continued to be welcomed on the streets of Chapeltown and Harehills and retailers accept and sometime request prayers for their businesses and for the local area.

**Prayer:** *Join us in our prayers for 2016 that the Lord will continue to lay it on all your hearts to pray fervently for the work of His people in this City of Leeds, especially in Harehills and Chapeltown and for the work of Street Pastors*

#### **An ever present hand of God:**

It will come as no surprise to you that over 2015 Street Pastors continued to see and feel the ever present hand of God at work. There are lots of changes in the areas: new people coming and going, businesses shutting and new ones opening. Chapeltown and Harehills continue to be blessed with people from all corners of God's world. This is evident when out on the streets, as Street Pastors continually encounter and engage with many different dialects and a diverse range of individuals and groups- some are well-known to us, often greeting Street Pastors with hugs and kisses; others totally new to the area feeling lost and lonely. Street Pastors remain surprised about how God prepares the way, breaking through language and other barriers. We regularly hand lollipops and occasionally water to individuals, children and families and have ended up with prayer and other requests.

One special and memorable occasion is when a young man recognised Street Pastors- he rushed up to us and shook our hands. He then reminded them us that we had prayed for him and that our God had answered our prayers. He stated one week after we had prayed for him. He ended up in hospital and the doctors told him that he was near to death. He thanked Street Pastors for our prayers. On another occasion a young woman- a new comer to the area, asked Street Pastors to get her a bible. Those of you who are regular readers of our newsletter will remember us recalling how Street Pastors' were once in the right place at the right time to save a young man's life. He was choking under the influence of drug. A Street Pastor placed him in the recovery position and they stayed with him until the ambulance arrived.

These are just a few example of God at work. Not all patrols are exciting, with something miraculous happening. It is often quiet and not much happens, but

Street Pastors are out there all over the UK as well as in Chapeltown and Harehills, ready for God's lead.

A special occasion of a different nature was when Maureen and Rod were finally commissioned. It was a wonderful service- God making clear how he has laid His hands on these two faithful and special people. As a reminder to those that don't know; Rod is not only a committed Street Pastor, he is also the chair of management committee. Maureen is also our co-ordinator with both giving more than two nights a month to this work. Two new Street Pastors have joined us. We thank the Lord for them and continue to pray that He will call many more to join in this work in this area and eventually, across the city.

**Thanksgiving:** *Thank you lord for Rod, Maureen and for the two new Street Pastors who have joined in your work here in this area. Thanks also for gifts of financial support. We pray that 2016 will see a flood of your people being called to this work, both in Chapeltown and Harehills and across the city of Leeds.*

**Prayer:** *We thank God for all those people who he has touched through the work of the Church on the Street: for the work of Street Pastors across the UK as well as just Leeds. Lord you know every strand of hair on our heads. We continue to pray for everyone we meet that 2016 will be the year that many of them will hear you knocking and open the doors of their hearts and invite you in.*

#### **Walking together:**

November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street Pastors urban partnership continues to be a beacon of how God also works in earthly ways. Street Pastors joined the local police and Neighbourhood Team out on the streets. Although covering the same area, the Police entrusted Street Pastors with their special way of patrolling. Street Pastors were not there as a form of lay police; they were there to walk alongside the young people, encouraging them to have fun but to do so safely and to consider the feelings of others. Street Pastors prayed on the streets as we came across groups of young people who seemed out to do mischief and older car drivers who drove up and down the streets provocatively, handing further supplies of fireworks. Street Pastors simply walked, chatted to the youngsters and prayed. We are not claiming to have done this on our own, as it was a partnership but the significance of our role was acknowledged by the police. An inspector for the area when asked by his superior; why it was that Harehills had such a terrible night, with burnt- out cars and police clashes on the streets, whilst in Chapeltown there was only one relatively small call- out. He simply replied, "We had Street Pastors out on the streets".

**A prayer for courage:** *Dear lord we continue to pray for the work of your people, including Street Pastors to realise your power and to be ready to go where you send them to do your work, to work in partnership to address social justice issues and to provide practical ministry and support on the streets. Give your people the courage and the willingness to step out in Your name.*