



Stratford-upon-Avon Street Pastors

Newsletter

SPRING 2023



Well it's time to light the candles and bring out the cake, Street Pastors is 20 years old this year! And what a journey it has been, from it's beginning's in London back in 2003 (taking a Jamaican idea of churches joining together and taking their values onto the street) to confront the gang culture they saw in their community, it has spread across the country to more than 240 towns and cities to become the nationwide initiative that Cares, Listens and Helps the night-time economy within communities.

Here's to the next 20 years!

Here in Stratford-Upon-Avon we have been Caring, Listening and Helping within our night-time economy too and having gathered all the stats together here is the fruit of our interactions in 2022:



2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love and a sound mind.



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stratforduponavon@streetpastors.org.uk

From a Street Pastor

Rob has kindly given us his take on what being a Street Pastor means for him.

Why Street Pastors...

I was looking for a way of outreach that would bless the public practically and, if possible, expose them to the Kingdom. In effect, in being seen to care for folk out on the streets, I was hoping that people would glimpse Christ in us and in what we were doing.

We rarely get opportunities to sit down with people and take them through the gospel account but I'm no longer concerned about this. At 'Oasis' recently our pastor, John, gave a sermon on Salt & Light. Jesus bids us to be salt and light to the world (Matthew 5:13). John said we should be careful not to over salt; just a little will suffice. He also said that we should not shine the light of the Gospel *at* people, we were to shine it *before* them. This is significant; rather than dazzling them we work quietly, not ostentatiously, we don't impose ourselves aggressively and the outcome of our low key caring work is winsome.

"I love what you do", "You're here for people and you don't even get paid" are two of the types of compliment that are shared voluntarily by the public. There is one further point I would make, however, whenever possible, I think it would be helpful if, when we were asked why we do what we do, we manage to bring the name of Jesus into the light..."We're Jesus' hands, eyes and feet on the street tonight" "We're disciples of Jesus and we feel called to care in this way". This, as well as saying that we're from different churches which is an important identifier in itself, will give a fuller picture of where we're coming from.

What do I love?

- Getting a hot drink and hot food for someone who has been sitting on the street and has not eaten (though often the public have beaten us to it!)
- Getting the chance to tell, youngsters especially, that "our God is crazy about them, they are so precious to Him".
- Getting the opportunity to be a part of a big God experiment of turning people from different Christian backgrounds into 'family'

Prayer Points:

- For more Street Pastors to join the team, we are currently at a minimum for patrols.
- Thanks for our new Prayer Pastors, Sue and Sandy.
- The Fred Winter Centre and all the services based there

Dates for your diary:

- A.G.M. on the 21st April at The Welcome Hall, Payton Street.
This year we will be joined by Police Inspector Ben Hembry.

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