



Wantage and Grove STREET PASTORS

Quarterly News

JAN
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Nigel Watt
Coordinator

I well remember from my childhood, the TV talent show 'Opportunity Knocks' with host Bob Monkhouse and his infamous closing line, 'If opportunity comes your way, don't knock it!' Okay, I'm old enough to remember Hughie Green too - I just don't like to admit it!

An opportunity came my way back in November to apply for a new part-time job in Wantage (alongside my role as WGSP Coordinator, of course!). I saw this new role advertised in a shop window and for two weeks I couldn't get it out of my mind. I thought about it all the time, wondering what the job involved and if I could fit it in with everything else I do. Two weeks later I returned to the shop to find that the advert had gone - a missed opportunity! Never mind, it obviously wasn't meant to be! Well, long story short, I went in the shop, got chatting to the assistant and found that the job was still available! We chatted more and a while later I left saying that I would give it some serious thought. Well, by the end of the day I had totally convinced myself that I couldn't do it, for all sorts of reasons, and I wouldn't be applying! The very next morning a friend messaged me to say they had had a dream about me getting a

new job, curiously in a very similar line of work. Well that made me sit up straight and gave me the confidence to at least re-think things and put in an application. I now have a new part-time job at Dolphin Gallery in Wantage and everything is working out well! Note to self: *When opportunity knocks...*

How we helped on the streets

We achieved ten patrols since our October edition of Quarterly News - three patrols in October, four in November and three in December. Thank you to everyone who enabled us to patrol on Christmas Eve - above and beyond the call of duty! Christmas Eve can be very busy in Wantage with many students home from university looking to catch up with their friends. We weren't able to patrol on New Year's Eve this time.

On one occasion our Street Pastors met a lady who was very upset having been abandoned by her friend who also had gone off with her house key. We spent some time with the lady and waited with her until her lift arrived. She was very grateful of our support. Street Pastors also spent time with a man who was very unhappy and feeling picked on by a group. He

took us up on our offer to walk some of the way home with him - avoiding his persecutors.

In November we encountered a man who seemed to be spoiling for a fight. Without endangering ourselves, we hovered nearby, slowly edging nearer. Our presence was enough and the man soon made his way home in a taxi - without starting a fight!

In December we got chatting to a group of lads who were messing around with trolleys at Sainsbury's. We gave them lollies and stayed with them until they decided to move on.



Two new Street Pastors join the team



Zack Smith and Liz Challis are 'uniformed-up' and starting patrols as Street Pastors. They attended the Roles & Responsibilities training in Reading back in November and have completed a number of other training sessions - some of the sessions being Ascension Trust's online training courses.

Zack is a young man who is keen to serve God with us by helping to look after our young people on the streets at night. He is well known by many of the people we meet and helps to bring our average age down a bit too!

Liz has been a Prayer Support Volunteer for many years, both here in Wantage & Grove and when she moved to Northampton. Liz has a heart for people and decided to train up as a Street Pastor having seen first-hand the good work that Street Pastors do across the UK.

Having new Street Pastors on the team will really help us cover absences - and with one or two more, we could break out a new Saturday team - hint, hint - is that opportunity knocking??? 😊

If you would like to see more of what we do on patrol, you are welcome to come out with us as an observer, just contact us to book in a no-commitment Friday or Saturday night taster session. In fact, if you're on the leadership team of your church, we especially welcome you to join us for a session. Seeing what really goes on in Wantage and Grove, and talking to those we meet on the streets, is so valuable in shaping how we, as the Church, serve our local communities.

When opportunity knocks...

“Pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to speak...” Colossians Ch 4 v 3 NLT. Paul asked his supporters to pray for an open door for them to speak God’s word - translated in the New Living Translation as ‘many opportunities’. God has certainly provided us with many opportunities of meeting people and serving them through caring, listening and helping on the streets of Wantage and Grove. We have an open door to make a difference in the lives of the people we meet, bringing the love of Christ to the streets every month and praying for peace in our communities. Here are some current opportunities that perhaps you could help with:

Event management

Street Pastor - daytime

Street Pastor - online

Patrol prayer

Trustee

?

Fundraising

Street Pastor - evening

Church rep liaison



There are plenty of opportunities to get involved and help us care for, listen to and help the people of Wantage and Grove. For more information please contact us (details below). Now is a great time to sign up for Street Pastor training as we will be running the all-important Roles & Responsibilities training course in March 2022. This could be the start of a whole new chapter for you - and don't forget, when opportunity knocks...

...don't knock it!

AT CEO - Bejoy Pal



Bejoy Pal has taken on the role of CEO of Ascension Trust and has written to encourage us to... “Be open to the impossible things that the Father has in store this year, be patient and obedient to the Holy Spirit’s prompting and walk faithfully and humbly alongside Jesus as he holds out His right hand and says, ‘I am with you’.” Former CEO Rev Les

Isaac OBE is now President of Ascension Trust and will represent the organisation around the UK.

Newbury SP Celebration

Newbury Street Pastors celebrate their 10 year anniversary on Saturday 12 March. They are holding a celebration from 7 pm at Newbury Methodist Church (RG14 1AN). Everyone is welcome to join them as they give thanks to God for his provision and all that he has done.

Book your space by emailing newbury@streetpastors.org.uk by 5 March.

COME AND JOIN US TO
CELEBRATE OUR

10 year anniversary



Upcoming Events

Roles & Responsibilities Training

Thinking of training as a Street Pastor? The all-important Roles & Responsibilities training is happening on Saturday 26 March in Wantage. Contact us for more information or to book your space and start your amazing journey as a Street Pastor.



Social Event - everyone welcome!

We're looking forward to gathering together when the weather warms up a bit in May. Put the date in your diary and keep an eye out for more information in the coming weeks.

Sunday 22 May, 3 pm



Wantage & Grove Street Pastors

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Street Pastors is an initiative of Ascension Trust, a Christian, inter-denominational organisation with a passion to empower individuals to work together within their local community and nation.