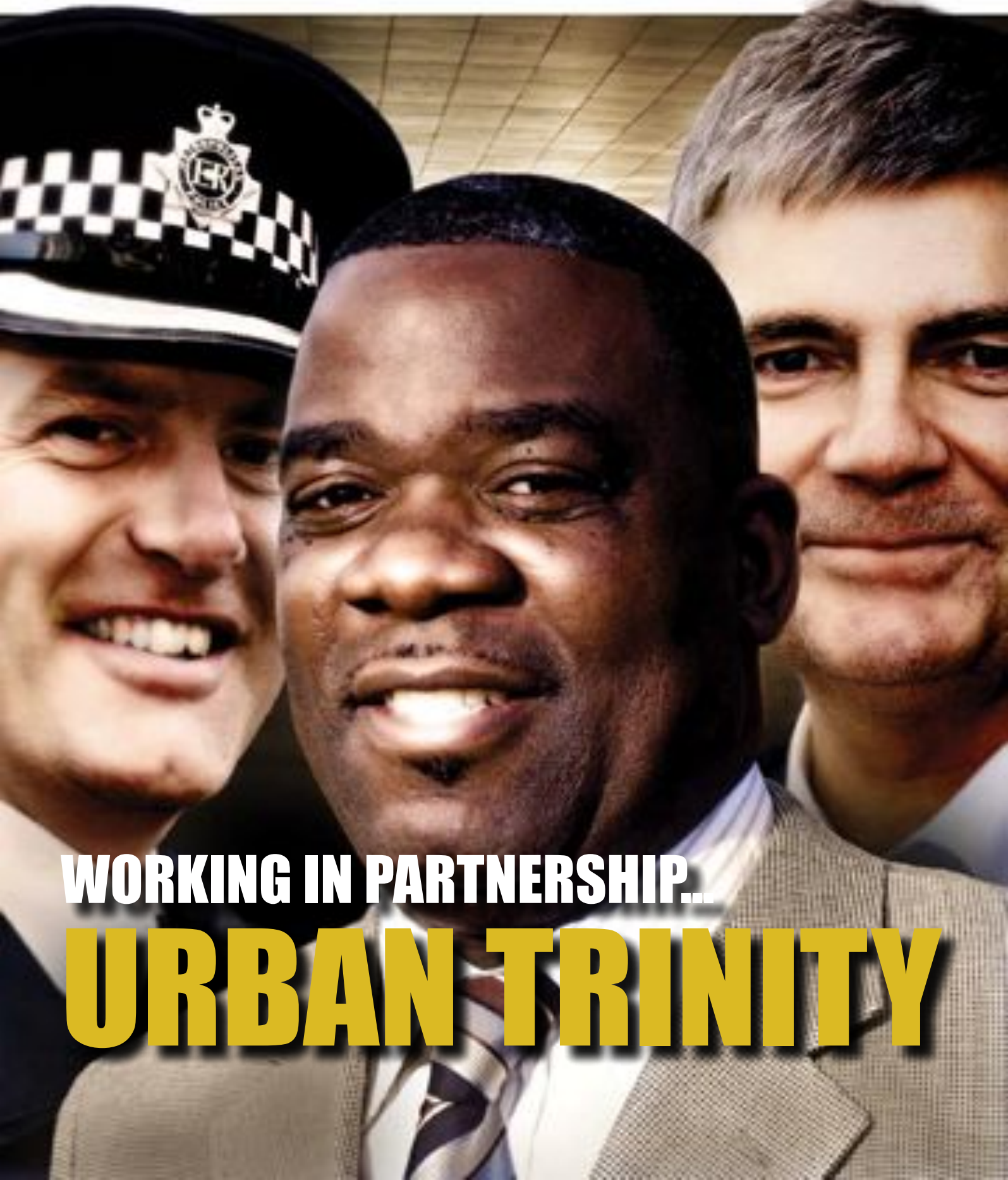


ON THE STREETS

ISSUE 1

CARING LISTENING HELPING



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP...

URBAN TRINITY

ENGAGE
WITH OUR
COMMUNITIES

Care Listen Help



www.streetpastors.org.uk



AN INITIATIVE OF ASCENSION TRUST



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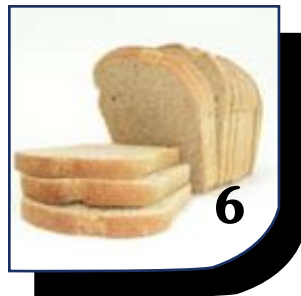
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STREET PASTORS...

an initiative of Ascension Trust, is an interdenominational church response to the problems of urban society.

Established in 1993, Ascension Trust desires to see Christians working effectively with their local churches, community and society.

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LES ISAAC

DIRECTOR, ASCENSION TRUST & STREET PASTORS INITIATIVE

We are at a critical moment in our society today. People are asking, what is the purpose of life? Does God really love me? Is there even a God? What is the purpose of the Church?

At the same time, I see so many young people drinking and misbehaving and I ask myself, 'why are they really doing that?' I believe that if we can begin to understand why, it can motivate us to respond appropriately.

The truth is that there are an awful lot of people who are living without hope. Given this context, the Church does have a vital role to play in the 21st century and that role is to deliver the message of hope to a generation that faces hopelessness.

Through our work, our message to young people is, 'there is hope'. But that message is not just for now, for as the Bible says, 'if in this world alone we have hope, we are of men most miserable.'

I have come to understand that people are looking for two things: time and love. Through our presence we are saying to people, 'we have time for you'. Through our actions we are saying, 'we love you'.

The Church also has an all-important message of peace. In this time of restorative justice, when people have to come to terms with things that they have done, the Church, as a representative and servant of the Prince of Peace, has a vital role to play in delivering that message to people everywhere. The message is one of forgiveness and reconciliation.

I am excited to see that all over this country Christians are putting aside their theological differences and traditions and are saying, 'we need each other', and are working together to show the grace of Jesus. Indeed, it is heartening to witness them working together to see how the things that we do have in common can serve the community and the Kingdom of God.

As we go into the sixth year of the Street Pastors initiative, we thank God for using us to touch and to change lives and we continue to look to him for the future. He has been faithful and indeed has given us the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind to do all the things he has set before us to do.

Please continue to support the work in prayer, financially and in other ways, as we are all necessary labourers together in the Lord's vineyard.

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CHALLENGE ON

Sirens scream in several London boroughs intermittently throughout the day. A vivid reminder that despite the hustle and bustle, the colour and cosmopolitan gaiety of a typical area like Brixton, there runs an undercurrent of fear across the city about the increasing number of gun and knife crimes.

The problem intensifies at nights, particularly Fridays and Saturdays, when hundreds of people congregate in pubs and clubs, creating a melting pot of emotions that often spills and flows as freely as the alcohol.

It's a similar story in other major cities like Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds. And smaller towns and suburbs like Yeovil, Gosport and Braintree are certainly not exempt. "I'd say that we're facing an epidemic," says Les Isaac, Director of Ascension Trust, a Christian charity based in Brixton. "And it calls for a practical solution that deals with the heart of the problem, not merely the symptoms."

Les' solution—a growing army of some two thousand men and women across the UK who patrol the streets in key volatile areas to befriend drunken or vulnerable partygoers and to defuse hostile situations. Armed with items that may be needed to help the people they meet—among them flip-flops, space blankets, sharps boxes to collect used syringes, water and warm smiles—the Street Pastors take to the streets on Friday and Saturday nights from about 10 p.m. until approximately 4 a.m. in the mornings.

The initiative started back in 2003. Lambeth was the first place to see Street Pastors, followed by Hackney.

"We started with 18 people," said Les, "fourteen of them women. And we've had phenomenal growth since 2003. Street Pastors are now in 22 boroughs across London and over 80 different locations throughout the UK.

Our reach stretches from places like Aberdeen and Inverness in Scotland to coastal areas that are totally different from them, like Southend and Portsmouth, to rural areas like Fair Oaks in Buckinghamshire. The initiative is tailored to fit each area where it operates.



OUR STREETS...



BUT STREET PASTORS TO THE RESCUE

“And the support in all areas has been overwhelming. Nightclub owners have collected offerings for the project because they are impressed with the contribution we are making. Restaurants and shops have offered us teas and coffees. A Muslim restaurant in one area has given our team space to have their debriefing meetings. In almost every town and city where we have teams operating, people can scarcely believe that the Street Pastors volunteer their time to do this work. One of the first questions they ask is, ‘how much are you being paid?’ It warms their heart to know that we care enough to be out there doing what we do.”

Politicians, local police and councils have also welcomed the work of the Street Pastors. One council, Lewisham, even paid for the post of Street Pastor Co-ordinator in a bid to ensure that it continued. And in several boroughs official crime statistics have shown significant decreases since Street Pastors started operating in their areas.

People have indeed been benefiting from the Street Pastors’ work. Les says that in any given area a myriad of things can be happening all at once when the Street Pastors are there: Street Pastors calming a potential fight in one spot; just yards away another couple of Street Pastors leading someone to the Lord and a bit further along Street Pastors listening to someone who wants to talk to them about a bereavement, a relationship break-up or some other trouble.

“Every night is different for the Street Pastors,” says Les. “We sometimes have to wait with vulnerable girls at bus stops to make sure they get on a bus safely, or we might have to accompany someone home who is too drunk to find their way or call them a taxi and inform whoever is at home that they are on their way. Some girls take their stilettos off at the end of a long night and walk

barefooted on the streets, so our teams carry flip-flops to hand out to them so their feet are protected from broken glass and syringes and we also hand out space blankets if they need them when going home in the much colder hours of the morning.”

As Director in charge of the Street Pastors initiative, Les says he does sometimes feel overwhelmed. “But two things keep me going,” he adds. “The grace of God when I see that God wants to touch people’s lives and the sure knowledge, when I look around me in society and see what is happening, that I cannot just

“We sometimes have to wait with vulnerable girls at bus stops to make sure they get on a bus safely...”

sit back and go to church and pray but that I am called to get out there and to do something.

Les concludes, “I am encouraged when I see that there are other people out there doing different things to address the challenges that are present on our streets—local government, schools, the police and people without faith. It is vitally important that we all work together because we need each other and that is the only way we are ever going to crack the crime that plagues our streets and destroys people’s lives.”



FROM...

JULAINE HEDMAN

Trustee, Ascension Trust

The Street Pastors initiative came at exactly the right time. It seemed to have a life of its own, as if there were all those Christians out there waiting for and wanting something to do. The initiative spoke into what we had been praying for and desiring.

Participating in the initiative gives people a sense that they are doing something practical and I have seen the joy on many faces when they have returned from patrols.

One young lady told me that the Street Pastors training has made her a better citizen. She said through doing it she has gained an understanding of many issues that affect people and feels better able to now apply the knowledge practically at community level. So even if she does not go out as a Street Pastor, she said she is now aware of her community and with some of its needs, for example, in the field of probation.

The Street Pastors training is indeed a launch pad from which trainees can go on to do whatever they want to do to change their world.

We have experienced tremendous growth in the last five years that the initiative has been operating. And with limited resources to do many things, I know that the accomplishments are nothing less than the work of God.

Before Street Pastors became such a major part of the work we do at Ascension Trust, we used to focus on training in areas like Bible history, and awareness of other religions and cults. Much of our work used to be also centred on missions.

In recent years, our impact has been felt mainly through the Street Pastors initiative. Missions also remain a focal part of what we do, although we have not been able to devote as much time to this area as we have done in the past.

...the
initiative
gives people a
sense that they are
doing something
practical...

Street Pastors

The Practitioner's Conference '09

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GREATEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD



Stu Clark
Co-ordinator of Plymouth
Street Pastors

“STREET PASTORS are the greatest thing since sliced bread!” declares Stu Clarke, Co-ordinator of Plymouth Street Pastors. “Down here in Plymouth, we’re grateful to Les, Eustace and the other leaders at Ascension Trust for sharing the vision with us.”

Stu describes the state of immediate excitement that enthused the meeting of some sixty Church leaders and representatives who met last September to discuss plans to initiate Street Pastors in Plymouth.

“We launched in December 2007,” said Stu. “Fifty people came forward for Street Pastor training which started in February 2008 and we had our commissioning service in May 2008, when forty-four of us went out on the streets that first night.

“It has been fantastic so far! In our first three patrols we spoke to five hundred people and collected 250 bottles—ridding the streets of them as potential weapons.

“We’ve since helped people with personal practical problems, for example, one night, we found a man who was distraught because he had been thrown out of his matrimonial home. He simply did not know what to do or where to go. We were able to direct him to the Salvation Army Hostel. Another time a young girl asked us if we could wait with her until her cab arrived because she felt frightened. We waited with her and provided that level of reassurance that she needed.

“The support has been overwhelming from the police and other partners; from shop keepers and door staff at night clubs and from the party goers themselves.

“Our aim as Street Pastors here in Plymouth is to create a presence on the streets from the churches, to make it known that the Church has left the building; to create a visible presence to reassure folk who may feel vulnerable; to help reduce the alarming fear of crime that far outweighs the actual reality of the situation; to be a listening ear to the lonely, the vulnerable, the frightened, the intimidated and those who are hurting and to offer genuine, non-judgemental pastoral support to those who request help.

“It is simply amazing to see how the Lord is working to accomplish these aims through our work.”



Street Pastors give flip-flops (the next best thing since sliced bread) to party goers to protect their feet.

“Our aim...to create a presence on the streets from the churches, to make it known that the Church has left the building...”



THINKING OF STARTING STREET PASTORS IN YOUR AREA



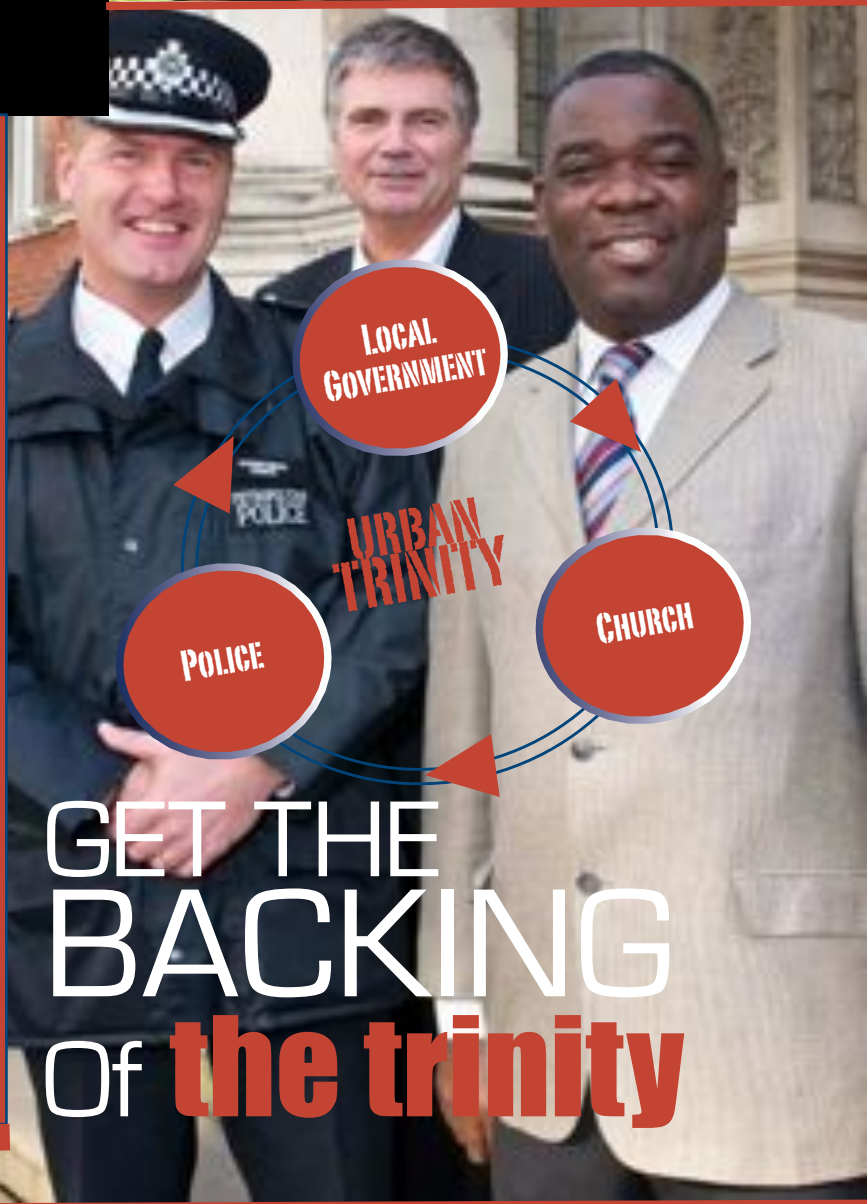
GET STARTED TODAY!

Street Pastors are spreading at a phenomenal rate across the UK and you too can have them patrolling your area.

Eustace Constance, Operations Manager for Ascension Trust and Street Pastors Co-ordinator for Hackney Borough said, "The basic requirements to set up a project in any area are to have at least four churches backing the scheme, with a minimum of twelve persons actively involved.

"You then need to secure the support of the local police and the local authority. Together with the Church, this gives what we call the urban trinity. Once the support of the urban trinity is in place, your local Street Pastors are ready to do training and then your streets are your oyster!"

For further information, please contact Ascension Trust on:
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GET THE BACKING Of **the trinity**



IN CELEBRATION OF OUR OLDER STREET PASTORS

WALKING THE STREETS AT 86



In city after city, town after town, people are amazed that the Street Pastors are willing to brave all weather conditions to be out way into the wee hours of the morning to assist and befriend them without being paid. But up and down the city streets of Plymouth, what amazes them even more is the grandfatherly figure of an 86 year old man who refuses to hang up his Street Pastor's uniform despite being practically blind and having suffered a mini stroke.

Reg Gilmore is one of the oldest Street Pastors in the UK, but despite being certified as practically blind since March

this year, and despite having suffered a mini stroke the same month, Reg is determined not to abandon his post. "I can only see shadows now," said Reg. "But," he jokes, "I have my white stick right here to defend myself."

Reg first donned his uniform officially on 23 May 2008 at the commissioning service of the Plymouth Street Pastors. Having received their orders and blessings, Reg and 43 other Street Pastors left the sanctuary

of the commissioning service and hit the streets of Plymouth.

"It was fantastic!" Reg recalls. "Plymouth has a lot of students and it's a totally different city at night from what it is in the daytime. At night, the students are usually out at the pubs in force and on our first night out every bunch of them that we bumped into stopped us to talk.

"They wanted to know how much we were being paid for being out there and it was a real wow for them when they found out that we were volunteers. Practically all of them welcomed us."

Amidst his excitement, however, Reg's

voice takes on a rueful tone when he speaks of the 17 year-old girl they met on that first night who was sleeping in a shop doorway.

"I thought that was so sad," said Reg. "We also met an old lady who was half drunk and slung backwards over a wall.

His voice returns to its animated pitch when he recalls the story of the two young men who had been out to drown their sorrows and were just talking about God seconds before rounding a corner and running into the Street Pastors.

"Their girl friends had left them," said Reg. "Their hands were swollen where they had punched walls and they had been talking about God and asking whether God made things happen. Seconds later, they came face to face with us. Now, that's a divine appointment! We were able to talk with them and they asked us to pray for them, which we did.

"What a God! What a God we have!" Reg says with quiet reverence. Still recovering from the effects of the mini stroke, Reg said, "As long as I am able to, I will continue to go out as a Street Pastor. And it doesn't matter about me being blind because 'he' is in charge." Reg points heavenward and adds, "And as long as 'he' is in charge, that's okay."

79 and Going Strong



John Tibbit may have passed his milestone of three score years and ten but he has no thoughts of slowing down or resting on his laurels. In addition to evangelising outside Wood Green Library on Saturday mornings, teaching children to read twice per week in a local junior school, helping to look after two children aged one and two on Saturdays, looking after a 99 year-old lady and organising a Bible study breakfast on Sunday mornings at his local church, John also finds time to go Street Pastoring with the group from Haringey.

At 79 years of age, where does he find the energy? "I suppose the Lord gives me strength," John says blithely. "I do suffer a bit on Mondays and Tuesdays, but I'm okay again by Wednesday and getting ready again for the weekend."

And it's not a phase either. John has been a Street Pastor for the past 18 or so months. "I like being in the company of other people," he said, "And I like helping them. That's why I do what I do."

"Since we started in December 2006, people have been pleased to see us on the streets. The response has been good and people stop and tell us that it's good to see us and to know that we're around.

"Often, I've found that it's pretty quiet on the streets. Sometimes we're just walking along meeting people. Many stop and ask us questions about who we are and what we are doing. Sometimes we

can have conversations that go on for up to half an hour! It's like we're a presence there planting good seeds that will bear fruit that we may not necessarily know about.

"Some time ago, for instance, a young lady came out of a pub and was heading for the nightclub across the street. She stopped and asked me what 'Street Pastor' meant. I explained that we were out to meet people and to help

them and that we were from the local church. She then told me that she had met someone who had been telling her about Allah and that Allah was a name for God. I told her that God had many names and told her some from the Bible; at which she said, 'I perceive that you are a Christian!' gave me a kiss and dived into the nightclub. I can only believe that I left her with something to think about.



Edith Lewis
Street Pastor, Brixton

RESPECT for mommy!

"GOD HAS NOT GIVEN HER THE SPIRIT OF FEAR BUT OF POWER AND OF LOVE AND OF A SOUND MIND."

Everyone stops to stare at the figure standing in-between the women. It is 71 year-old Edith Lewis, Street Pastor with one of the Brixton teams. Drop a pin and it would have been heard.

Affectionately dubbed by some as 'Mafia Mommy', Edith cleans up the patch and commands the women to leave the scene. They readily comply.

Edith is somewhat of a mystery to members of her Street Pastors team as well as to people they meet on the streets. "You can't do that," she has been told on occasion when she has trod where others fear to tread.

"But," says Edith, "I have to do what God has called me to do. And if he calls you to something, he will protect you where that calling takes you."

In truth, no Street Pastor has ever been hurt while on duty and many have had to intervene in some pretty dangerous situations. All the Street Pastors will attest to the importance of others praying for them while they are out on patrol. Edith's courage comes from the vision she received some years ago. "I pictured

myself in a basement in Brixton talking to some drug addicts," she said. "I have always wanted to help the youth on the streets and to feed the hungry, but I didn't know how.

"Then some time ago, round about the time when Street Pastors first began, I was watching a film about some young bad guys. In the film, one of the young men blew his own head off after watching a gangster do the same thing on television. It made me think how much what we were seeing on television was happening in society right now. The film actually ministered to me and I just wished I could get an opportunity to help our youth.

"That same Sunday, when I went to church, they talked about the Street Pastors initiative and I knew I just had to help.

"We have been involved in so many situations since going out on the streets. I could write a book about it all! Perhaps I can tell you some of those other stories another time."

On a Brixton Street, two young women hurl abuses, too heinous to replicate, at each other. Their curses light up the night sky, much to the entertainment of those standing by and egging them on. Faces peer out of the shop doorways along the street, necks craned and ears cocked to drink in the sordid tale.

A cat fight was definitely brewing. Nails arched, at the ready to tear at her opponents flesh. Busts heaved. Throats were sore and dry.

A short distance away, a pair of footsteps pounded along the pavement towards the warring women. Their curses drowned out the determined thuds. Seconds later, a uniformed figure appears in the midst of the fray. With a hand of authority firmly planted on each woman, the figure pushes the women apart and commands in a voice that silences all, "The blood of Jesus! In the name of Jesus, stop it!"

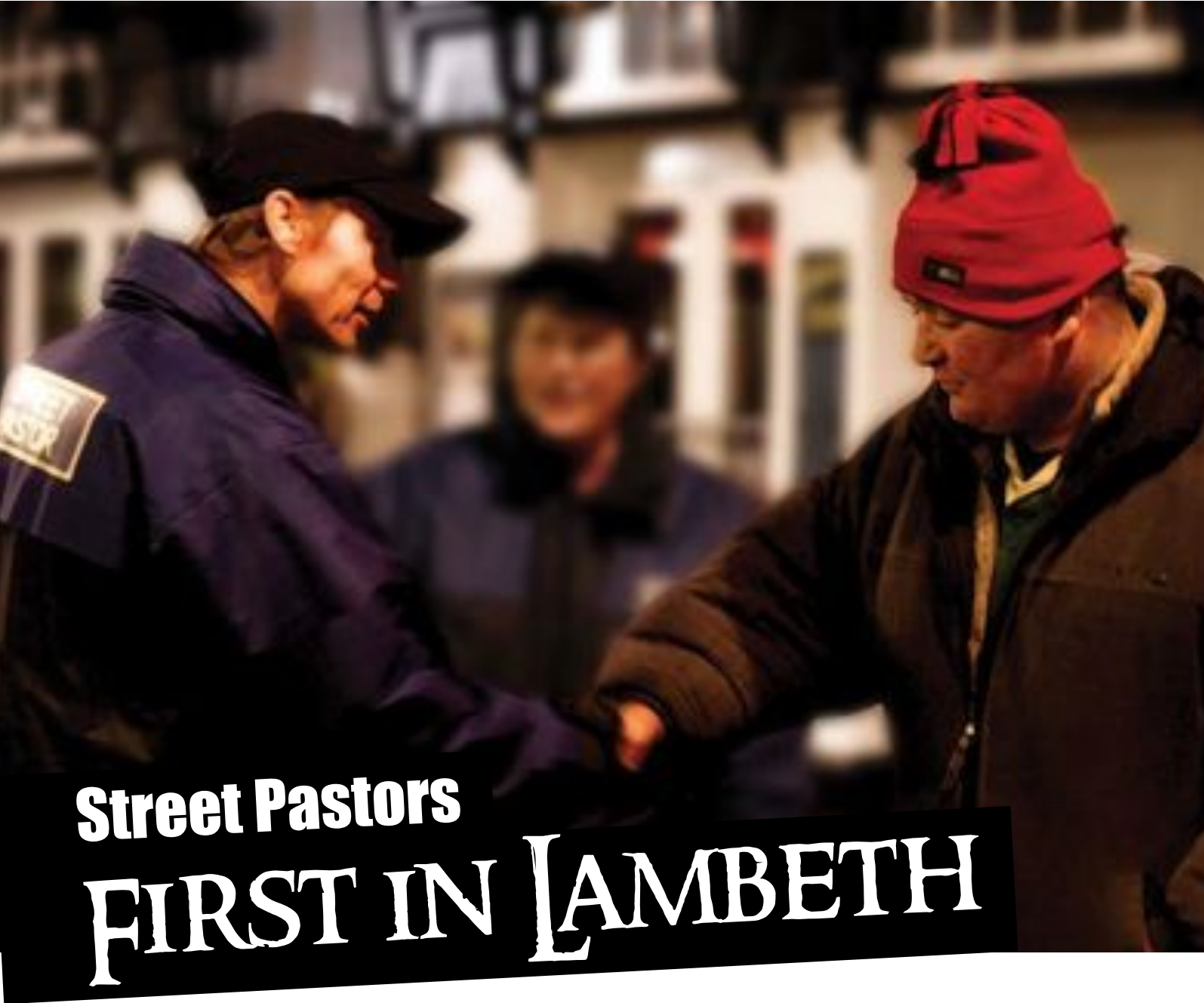
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Street Pastors FIRST IN LAMBETH

Talk Street Pastors and Lambeth goes down in history as the very first place in the UK where patrols were dispatched on the streets.

Five years on, Herma Butler, leader in charge of one of the Lambeth teams, recalls that very first patrol.

"I remember it was freezing cold that night," said Herma. "Those Street Pastor coats came in really handy. It was the kind of night when you just wanted to stay in and curl up on the sofa with a hot water bottle and especially after a full day's work. But when you've made a commitment you know you have to go.

"It was about twelve of us in all who went out. People were curious about why we were out there. We told them that it was just because we cared and they

opened their hearts to us on that very first night.

"Over the years, they have come to expect us out there and if they miss any of us for a few weeks they'll ask after us."

"I have never felt frightened on the streets because people are always praying for us..."

Today, that initial twelve has grown to forty-two. Their presence has made a difference in Lambeth, with police reporting decreases in gun and knife crimes since the street pastors started operating there.

"The issues are still out there," Herma said, "but when people see us, they do change their behaviour. They see us in

some cases as mediators. For instance, one night, someone came up to us and said, 'tell that man to give me my phone or else I'll kill him.' Another time, there were two guys quarrelling. One of them had broken a bottle to use as a weapon but when we came onto the scene they jumped into their cars and drove off.

"People generally say all the Church does is talk and collect money, but I remember being especially thankful to God at the end of that very first night that we were able to be out there doing something.

"I have never felt frightened on the streets because people are always praying for us. And now, my only desire is to see even more churches getting involved."



FROM LONDON TO ABERDEEN



Street Pastors are stretching across the country

A DIVINE APPOINTMENT

When Major Martin Hill first met Eustace Constance, Operations Manager for Ascension Trust, in London back in

2004, perhaps he was unaware that the revelation was for another place, another time.

Major Hill was then working at The Salvation Army's UK Headquarters, but subsequently moved to Aberdeen in 2005. The Street Pastors seed travelled with him all the way up country.

"It seemed to me," he said, "that the Street Pastors idea that I had come across in London would be very relevant for Aberdeen City Centre."

Following training, twenty-six Street Pastors from ten different churches took to the Streets of the Scottish city in October 2007.

"The overall reaction has been great," said Major Hill. "The Police have been extremely supportive. Representatives from Aberdeen City Council have been positive. Local churches have encouraged us with prayer, donations and requests to speak to them about the work. And people on the street are inquisitive. They want to know what it is about too. 'What is Street Pastors?' is the most frequent, and the best opening question to be asked. We have built up good relations with doormen and taxi marshals as well.

We are finding ourselves included as a respected local organisation, being invited to meetings and seminars about community issues."

Currently, Aberdeen Street Pastors only go out on Friday nights.

Major Hill said, "We sense there are more Christians wanting to be involved in this initiative. So we are looking to recruit more Street Pastors. This may also allow us to be a presence on the streets on Saturday evenings too."

caring, listening, helping



Number one

FOR WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

NO.1

joined with us to address the town centre crisis," said Mark. "The partnership saw 40 Street Pastors volunteering and since we have been operating, the town centre is perceived to be a lot calmer and quieter. There is not as much violence as before.

"The overall response has been positive. People have welcomed us, although some pub and club owners have been sceptical."

Nevertheless, the Street Pastors' impact has been felt. Last Christmas saw a drop in alcohol related violence and police congratulated them for being instrumental in achieving that. At the request of the police and local authorities, the Street Pastors are now preparing to get involved in some other areas of the Bridgend Borough.

"We could not have done any of this on our own," said Mark. "Over the past year, we have had the support of many partners. We'd like to thank them all for their contributions at the forefront and behind the scenes. We do a vital work and without their support we would not have been able to achieve the tremendous results that we have seen in the last twelve months."

Bridgend Street Pastors Win Police Award

They have only been in operation for just over a year, but already the Bridgend Street Pastors have won an award in South Wales' prestigious Police Annual Awards. The Street Pastors were short listed with two other contenders but came out on top in the category for Partnership Working.

Mark Thomas, who first contacted Street Pastors about the needs in

Bridgend, said, "It's just nice for the team to have that bit of recognition from the police."

Mark's Church, Hope Baptist, stands in the town centre of Bridgend, surrounded by pubs and clubs. Mark became concerned about the troublesome nightlife in Bridgend: the town had a bad reputation for public disorder. He observed that there were more people outside the church at nights than people who attended on Sundays and he was spurred into action when thugs murdered a young man just thirty yards from the building.

"Twelve other churches, the local police and the Bridgend County Borough Council





HELPING

CRIME REDUCTION

In just under six months of beginning operation, Street Pastors in Kingston, Surrey, have contributed to a reduction in street crimes in the area. Police statistics as at December 2006 showed the startling figures, following the Street Pastors patrols that began in June of the same year on Friday nights only.

Paul Jacobs, Co-ordinator of the Kingston group, said, "This is what Christians ought to be doing. Currently, we have 48 Street Pastors from 23 different churches who go out. We have 20 other prayer pastors who pray while we are out on patrol and 120 prayer pastors who receive our prayer letter every week.

"The Street Pastors work gives the Church a focus on what we can do

together and it is changing people's attitudes about what the Church is."

Recognising the impact the Street Pastors are having, local police have requested that they go out on Sundays and Bank Holiday weekends as well. February 2007 saw the Kingston group being able to add Saturday nights to their patrols and plans are in place that may soon enable them to start their Friday patrols much earlier at about 7 p.m. in order to engage with 14 to 18 year-olds who are out at that time.

"The responses to our presence has been positive," Paul reported. "There has been a general attitude of respect. People have been known to clap as we walk by and they can't get their heads around the idea of older people choosing

to go out there, until 4 a.m. in the to help.

"Some club owners have given money to help fund the project. This has been used to buy flip-flops and heat retaining blankets that we give out to party goers when needed.

"Our conversations with people have deepened; people open up their whole lives to us.

"We would love to see even more churches get involved with this work, whether by donating money or by volunteering to become Street Pastors.

Through this initiative we are saying that the Church has left the building and is engaging in meaningful ways with people out there."

unpaid, mornings



"The Street Pastors work gives the Church a focus on what we can do together..."

Recognising the impact the Street Pastors are having, local police have requested that they go out on Sundays and Bank Holiday weekends as well.



REPRISALS ON UK STREETS



David Shosanya

up with Les Isaac and became co-founder of the Street Pastors movement.

Unarmed of physical weapons when they are out on patrol and well aware, as the Bible says, that their fight is not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in high

places, the Street Pastors have been pushing back the frontiers of the 'enemy' in towns and cities across the UK.

David, who became a Christian under Les' pastoral ministry, said, "Guns and knives are definitely not the answer.

We are fighting back with our faith and growing in confidence in that faith as we are used in practical ways to make a difference in people's lives."

David says that the major changes he has seen since the initiative began are a connection and joined up way of thinking among the Church, the police and local government authorities as they all work together to crack crime.

"There are challenges, however," he said. "There are not enough black people getting involved in the initiative. We feel that it is important to see all sections of society fully involved because the issues affect all of us equally."

When David Shosanya lost a close friend in a shooting incident, he got on the war path for vengeance. Determined that the 'enemy' should cease and desist from further acts of violence, David teamed

SCHOOL PASTORS

COMING TO A SCHOOL NEAR YOU



David was not perturbed when he had only five little stones with which to face the giant. And neither was Pam Bryan when only five volunteers turned up to train as Schools Pastors for Purley.

Though admittedly a bit apprehensive at first by the small number of responses

from local churches for volunteers to come forward for training, Pam Bryan, who is the Associate Minister for the Community at her local church in Purley, said, "David defeated the giant with only five stones and so I am reassured by that number five."

Extending the well-known Street Pastors framework, the idea behind Schools Pastors is to have a team working

with teenagers after school as they make their way home through the town centre.

"There's a sheer mass of kids passing through Purley every afternoon," said Pam. "My vision is for the Church to be there in every aspect of community life in Purley and to bring about transformation. And the biggest felt need is the kids coming out of school every afternoon.



VOICES IN BIRMINGHAM

"I am especially passionate about this because no one ever told me about Jesus when I was a child. I only became a Christian at the age of 30. I often ask myself, 'where was the Church all my life?'"

"With the Schools Pastors, our plan is to meet the kids in school and then go with them into the town centre and on the buses and just to be a presence to offer help and support as the Lord leads us."

"God seems to bless the ventures that come out of churches working together. I have seen it happen in other places. And, yes, we will tackle Goliath with our five stones but my prayer is that the churches in and around Purley will make a concerted effort to support this vital initiative for the sake of our young people."



Pam Bryan

"...OUR PLAN IS TO... BE A PRESENCE, OFFER HELP AND SUPPORT AS THE LORD LEADS..."

If you are interested in joining School Pastors, please contact Ascension Trust at info@ascensiontrust.org.uk or visit www.streetpastors.org

“With so many voices shouting out in society today it is essential that the Church’s voice be heard as well.” So says Street Pastor, Sylvia Joseph, who works with the Birmingham Street Pastors initiative in some of the cities most volatile communities.

The initiative started in Birmingham some four years ago with approximately 40 Street Pastor volunteers. Sylvia, who has been with the group from the beginning, said she absolutely loves it.

"I had been on mission trips before," she explained. "To Albania with Les Isaac as well as to other places with other groups. So working with the Street Pastors in my local communities is right up my street. I got involved because I wanted to be more proactive in my community here in the Midlands and also because of the shootings that have drawn national attention, such as the incidents that killed Letisha and Charlene some years ago. There is much work to do and much need out there on the streets."

The Birmingham Street Pastors typically patrol areas in Aston, Lozells, Handsworth, Perry Bar and Witton. In addition to covering the usual 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. shift, they now meet at 7:45 pm to pray and then go out at 8:30 p.m. in order to engage with sections of the communities that they would otherwise miss.

"People were a bit dubious when we first hit the streets," Sylvia said. "Perhaps because of our blue uniform they thought we were some form of police street patrol. We were on their turf, especially, say, if we entered a pub, and they wanted to know what our purpose was. But we tried to build up a consistency with our presence and gradually people began to accept us."

"Occasionally, people don't want to engage with us but on the other hand, we can end up engaging with particular groups or individuals all night! On the whole, different communities are now more open to us—Asians, Africans, Italians, the Chinese. People will invite us

into their business places. For example when we pass some take-aways they will insist that we come in and sit down. Boys will shout out, 'Street Pastor' when they see us and some senior people have been glad to see us out. And now, different community groups are asking us to come out and participate in events during the daytime. I see it all as the breaking down of barriers.

"The support from the police has been great as well. We have to report to them at the start of each patrol and also when we return."

Sylvia says the mixture of ages and experience represented among the Street Pastors in Birmingham has been good for the group. "We've got younger people, right up to senior citizens, including Elfreda Clarke who is at least into her 70's and she keeps up with us very well when we're out on patrol."

In terms of support from local churches, Sylvia says the Street Pastors crave the covering of prayers and publicity for the initiative among congregations. "There are things happening in the spirit realm all the time," she said. "So prayer is key as well as the spread of awareness of our work in the different churches so that new people can come on board."

"There are so many stories I could tell of how God has moved and directed us and I know prayer has played a key role. As an example, there was the time when we got locked out of the building where we normally pray before going out on patrol so we just decided to pray outside. As we were there, a group of boys passed us. Then a few minutes later another group went past in the same direction. We suspected that something was afoot and it turned out just as well that we were there to see it because an altercation did in fact develop between the two groups and we were on hand to help to defuse the situation. Now, if we had been inside the building as we usually were at that time, there is no telling what the outcome might have been."



"There's the story, too, of Mara and her family. Mara heard one of our Street Pastor advertisements on local radio some time back. She phoned us in an attitude of scepticism but the outcome was that she eventually gave her life to the Lord and still serves him today.

"There are so many such stories I could relate. I thank God for Les' vision. The Street Pastors initiative has grown phenomenally because of his passion and commitment and through the initiative we are indeed making the Church's voice ring loud and clear in our society

and making a difference in people's lives. "Street Pastors is not a denominational thing. It is open to anyone to participate as long as they love the Lord and want to see change in local communities."

Assistant Chief Constable Endorses Street Pastors

Assistant Chief Constable of Police for Avon and Somerset, Olivia Pinkney, endorses the Street Pastors initiative as a fantastic partnership to work with.

Like so many in the police force across the UK, Assistant Chief Constable Pinkney stands one hundred percent behind the work of the Street Pastors. "From a police point of view, it's a fantastic partnership to work with," she said when asked for comment on the project. "The sheer goodwill and commonsense of the organisation speaks for itself. It's a hugely beneficial programme."

Assistant Chief Constable Pinkney was first involved with the Street Pastors when she was the Chief Superintendent in charge of Bath and North East Somerset. While in that post, the Street Pastors programme was launched in Bath.

"The Bath launch in June this year was tremendously uplifting," Pinkney said. "We welcomed the commencement of the programme in Bath because there has been some anti-social behaviour in the area and the more eyes and ears out there, the better. The Street Pastors are helping to keep people safe and I have no doubt that as the programme gets underway the area will reap huge benefits and much needed social transformation."

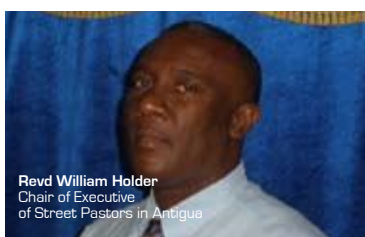
"THE STREET PASTORS ARE HELPING TO KEEP PEOPLE SAFE..."

Olivia Pinkney,
Assistant Chief Constable
of Police for Avon and Somerset

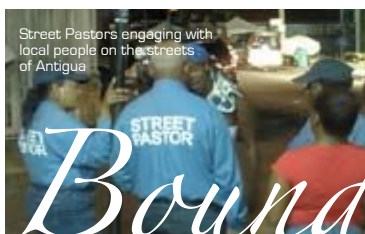




...a street in Antigua



Revd William Holder
Chair of Executive
of Street Pastors in Antigua



Street Pastors engaging with
local people on the streets
of Antigua



Paula and Martin Callam

Bound for Antigua

Martin and Paula Callam bade us farewell in September and flew out to Antigua to take up their new posts as Street Pastors Co-ordinators for the island

They had their hearts set on Christian work in Bosnia, but God directed them to Antigua instead. Martin and Paula were putting plans in place to go to Bosnia. At the same time they were involved with their local Norwich Street Pastors group but had not actually trained because they were certain they would end up having to leave for Bosnia as soon as the training was completed. When the plans for Bosnia fell through, however, the Callams asked the Lord what he wanted them to do instead. "We didn't want to just sit doing nothing," said Paula. "So we decided to get more involved with Street Pastors. And that's when Norfolk Street Pastors Co-ordinator, Val Dodsworth, contacted us to say Antigua needed a couple to work as co-ordinators there and that the Lord had woken her three times during the night with our names as suggestions. "We prayed about it and so many other little things happened to confirm that Antigua was where God wanted us to be. "We went to the island in June to see exactly what would be involved and to meet with the other workers out there.

Things went well and everything was subsequently put in place for the move. "Of course, we have our apprehensions. It's a different country. A different culture. I am not so naive as to think we can go out there and expect things to be done exactly as we do them here but we are looking forward to getting involved and taking the work forward." Martin, who has taken early retirement from his career as a pharmacist in order to go to Antigua, said, "It's an exciting opportunity, I am so privileged to be a part of it. We are looking forward to working with the management board out there, the local churches and the other workers and Street Pastors."

As co-ordinators, Martin and Paula will be promoting the Street Pastors initiative in Antigua with a view to establishing it as a model for other Caribbean islands to follow.

"The aim is to expand the vision," they said, "and to get more people and churches involved. Currently, the Street Pastors there go out on Friday nights but we aim to develop more teams so they can extend that to Saturday nights also.

"Here in Norwich, we have developed in such a way that we now have teams who go out on some afternoons as well and get involved with other things like litter picking and cleaning graffiti.

"We're not laying out a prescription for Antigua based on the Norwich experience but we are saying we're committed to seeing the work grow and bear fruit.

"The government there backs the work and provides the Street Pastors with an office. They also pay for the uniforms.

We want to get the work organised so that they can see what they are supporting and know beyond the shadow of a doubt that it is a worthy cause and they are getting their money's worth."

Les Isaac, founder of the Street Pastors initiative said, "I am excited at the appointment of the Callams as co-ordinators for Antigua. I have every confidence that God will use them to develop the work. Antigua has needed a co-ordinator for a long time and God has sent them just at the right time in answer to prayers."



Hon Hilson Baptiste
Minister of Housing, Culture and Social
Transformation for the Government of
Antigua and Barbuda



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to offer help and
support**



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**SCHOOL PASTORS
WALKING
THE STREETS**



STREET PASTORS

Street Pastors is an interdenominational church response to the problems of urban society

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Established in 1993, Ascension Trust desires to see Christians working effectively with their local churches, community and society.

For more information on the Street Pastors Training Course, please contact Ascension Trust: info@ascensiontrust.org.uk

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