

TRANSFORMING LIVES TOGETHER

A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE
DIOCESE OF CHESTER AND CUF



Prayer Partners' Newsletter May 2017

Once again, I welcome you to our Prayer Partners' Newsletter. I'm sorry that we are a little late with this edition but I know that you will all have been busy with Easter too! (I couldn't resist the photo of lambs!) We have had a fairly hectic time and have been privileged to meet lots more interesting people and explore their projects and initiatives. Let's tell you a bit more about what we have been up to and then we would like to give you some prayer pointers please.

- In March, Kath and Wendy travelled to London to meet with other Joint Venture and CUF colleagues. We had a productive meeting and since then we have had sight of the **Church Urban Fund Report** on the effectiveness of JVs across the country. Here is the link for your information <http://bit.ly/2plAamK>

Please pray for us and for our colleagues across the country, as we get involved in projects, which help to tackle poverty in its widest sense.

- We were back to visit Churches Together in Sale last month. You may recall that they had asked us to help them to explore their local response to homelessness and to social isolation. We are pleased to report that at the latest meeting, there was a real appetite for creating some Places of Welcome and we are eagerly awaiting news that they want to proceed.

Places of Welcome is an initiative that we are promoting and hoping to spread across the Diocese. (Ask us about it!) There are already some great examples in the Wirral and now there are 5 churches in the Ellesmere Port area who are about to begin.



Please pray that these churches experience success in their venture and that many more capture this vision.

- In April Kath visited "**What's Happening on North Street?**" Which is a café run by the Methodist Church in Crewe. It was fantastic to see how well used the café is and what great opportunities are offered to individuals and to the community. If you know of any other examples of community cafes in which we may be interested, let us know.

Please pray for community cafes and church projects which hope to show God's love in a practical way whilst reducing social isolation.

- On 25th April we held an event, "**Filling the Gap**" which was to raise awareness of the need for school holiday activities and feeding programmes. Sadly, for many children who are in receipt of free school meals the holidays can be a time of hunger as their main meal of the day is not available. We were delighted to see more than 20 churches represented to hear inspiring presentations from Hazel Boston, Sale West Community Church and Rev. Tina Upton, Holy Trinity, Blacon.

We are going to run **another event in the Autumn** to explore experiences and hopefully to inspire even more.

Please pray that more churches may consider this idea as something which they could do and that those churches who have plans to deliver this initiative experience success and blessing.

- Life was a bit hectic on 25th April as we also held a second event - 'Connecting our Churches and Communities' at Wirral Christian Centre, Birkenhead. This event was for leaders of different Christian denominations and was well attended (22 churches represented) by leaders of Methodist, URC, Anglican, Baptist, Catholic and Independent churches.

The purpose of the event was to discuss how churches can work more closely together across Wirral and how they can engage with existing initiatives such as the exciting and innovative '**Community Connectors**' funded by Public Health.



Pray that this unity will continue to grow and flourish.

Curating Spaces of Hope is a brilliant initiative of Matthew Barber. We attended the symposium held in Stockport last month and heard some inspiring presentations and had the opportunity to see what Public Sector and faith communities can achieve when working together. There is a further event in Chester Cathedral in June, which we encourage you to attend if you are concerned about the rising levels of social isolation in our society.

- *Please pray for People who are lonely and isolated. This is an intergenerational issue, which cuts across the whole of our society. Please also pray for the event in June, that more people are moved to connect with friends and neighbours motivating our communities to a more concerned and compassionate way of living.*

Once again, please accept our grateful thanks for your prayers and support. Please feel free to share this newsletter with friends, neighbours, colleagues and churches.

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