

# 21 years

IN ST PAULS  
1984 – 2005

## God is faithful

### *Crisis Centre Ministries*

Bringing God's grace and healing love  
to people with life-disrupting problems

### **Newsletter April 2005**

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**While including various aspects of our work, this issue features The Wild Goose.**

## **THE CROSS**

It's just about the simplest shape we know: two lines, one up and one sideways, meeting at a right angle. We see it in jewellery and sculpture, and at Easter we often see it with the figure of a man hanging on it. Jesus.

The cross is a reminder of Jesus' death: it is the instrument on which He was tortured and killed. It is also a symbol of His life, and of God's care for us throughout history.

### **Heaven and Earth**

Some Christians, it is said, are 'so heavenly minded that they are no earthly use', and some focus so much on earthly matters that Heaven seems forgotten.

In the beginning, we read, God created the heavens (the spiritual world) and the Earth (the physical world) and both were good. God created both the spiritual and the physical: He is interested in both, and He cares about both. So if both matter to our Heavenly Father, perhaps they should both matter to us.

The cross is a symbol of this unity: the upright stretching towards Heaven, the horizontal reaching out across the Earth. It is the place where Heaven and Earth meet, where God and man come together.

### **Jesus**

The cross speaks to us of Jesus, His life and ministry. He is truly God (the vertical piece) and truly human (the horizontal piece), together in one form. As we look at Jesus, we begin to understand God; and we understand more clearly what it means to be fully human, fully alive.

Jesus cared for the physical needs of the people He met, and told His followers to do the same - He fed the hungry, He healed the sick. He also cared for the spiritual needs of the people He met - He forgave sins and reconciled enemies. He brought freedom and peace to His followers' souls as well as their bodies. He communicated God's love, and His absolute willingness to forgive whenever we turn back to Him. In his teaching, Jesus held together the physical and the spiritual. The two greatest commands, He told us, are to love God and to love our neighbour.

### **And Us**

We, too, are called to live at this place of the cross, to recognise the importance of both the physical world and the spiritual world, to love God and our neighbour.

Living like this is not easy. To start off, if I am to love my neighbour, I have to listen to them - to find out what they want and what they need. We are told to feed the hungry and visit the prisoner. It is so easy to think we know what other people need, so easy for example, to end up visiting (rather than feeding) the hungry because we have not taken time to listen to what they have to tell us.

Jesus calls us to follow Him, to join in His mission. The start for us, as it was for Him, is simply to be there for the people who need us. And as we give our lives for others, we discover that God has a new resurrection life for us.

Paul Hazelden, General Manager

**OUR 21<sup>ST</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION** This year, as you see from the frontsheet, we are celebrating 21 years of 'bringing God's grace and healing love to people with life-disrupting problems'.

Please come and celebrate with us (you may want to make a note in your diary now) on Monday 17 October at 7.30 pm, (venue to be confirmed). The Bishop of Bristol has kindly agreed to be our speaker.



Here is just a glimpse of the work of The Wild Goose.

Central to our work, The Wild Goose is designed to be welcoming and attractive to our clients – to provide a non-threatening point of contact for them with the services we offer. We have become well known in the area, to our clients and also to statutory and voluntary agencies as well as churches in the city.

Our aim is that The Wild Goose is known as a place which provides something resembling a home environment to our clients. The majority of our clients are not in contact with their families and have no sense of home (literally homeless). With the involvement of our brilliant volunteers, alongside our staff, we do this by offering a genuine welcome and showing respect to people who are not likely to experience that in their lives. This provides the backdrop to the support and help we are able to offer.

James Preston, pictured below working in the kitchen of The Wild Goose, is the manager of the shop. He writes:

***“Church Partnership:***

*The Wild Goose café is a key part of the ministry of The Crisis Centre. This is a place where the people we want to reach out to are welcome to come and enjoy a meal and friendship.*

*We would like to work in partnership with churches in Bristol, with teams of volunteers coming from churches to run a session so that we can open the café as regularly as possible. For a church to get involved in this way and open the café one evening a week, this would require about 20 volunteers willing to come in once a month and two volunteer duty managers willing to organise the teams and come in alternate weeks.*

*A vital key to helping people move on is a welcoming community that accepts them and gives them a fresh view of life and how to handle it. This is something that a church is able to do and is why we wish to work in partnership with churches in this way.*

*If you are interested or would like to know more then please contact me – contact details are on the back of this newsletter. There are many books related to what we do, such as Caring for Ex-offenders published by Alpha Publications and Faithworks by Steve Chalke.”*

Please pray for the work of the Wild Goose, for the staff and volunteers and their contact with clients, and for the clients who come in. Here are three brief outlines of people who come into The Wild Goose:

Sarah\* has been coming into The Wild Goose from time to time for about two years. She has five children, all of whom are adopted, and she is currently pregnant. She finds maintaining her life very difficult, if not impossible. She has her own flat, but becomes lonely and can invite people to stay with her. Experience has shown that this becomes difficult, the situation erupts, Sarah does not take her medication and risks being hospitalised

Kelly\* had just started coming into The Wild Goose. She had just been given a new flat, but has been caught shoplifting and is presently in prison.

Peter\* has been addicted drugs and went through a rehabilitation programme. He did well for quite a long time and was recently given his own flat. However, it seems that this was difficult for him and he has recently started using drugs again. He is distressed by this. He is due to go to a rehabilitation centre in the next week.

\* names changed to protect identity

### **Property and equipment**

We have been giving attention to some of the practical aspects of the property; the kitchen was renovated a couple of years ago and the coffee shop area redecorated; some of the joists to the rear of the property were rotten and these have been replaced; more recently the toilet, and the floor in that area, has been replaced.

We are very grateful to Richard Bazlinton who has built food storage cupboards in our basement and also fitted a door which now separates off a room in our basement allowing us to use that for confidential sessions with our clients, group work etc. Thank you too to our many supporters who are generously donating to us non-perishable foods, and those who regularly bake for us.

Our thanks, also, to Nisbetts who have been tremendously generous and donated to us much needed, and very good quality, saucepans, frying pan, knives and kitchen utensils. Thank you Nisbetts for supporting us in this way and we pray that you will know God's blessing in your business.

Much of the work has been done, but there is more!

- To meet with fire regulations we need to have two staircases from the coffee shop to the basement. Though we do have two, one is not usable because there is insufficient headroom. This one needs to be replaced.
- The flooring in the coffee shop is presently in a very bad state and is in urgent need of replacement.
- The new cupboards and door in the basement need to be painted, and the walls in the basement also need redecoration.
- The carpet tiles in the back room of the basement need to be replaced and we would like to put good quality vinyl-type flooring in the front room of the basement.
- Now that we have a separate room in the basement, we would like a computer which can be used by volunteers to access resources relevant to our clients.

We have contacted a number of companies asking for help with these needs and we would value your prayers that these contacts will be fruitful.

### **Placements**

From time to time we have people on placement, attached to the various aspects of the ministry.

In The Wild Goose, Penny, an ordinand from Trinity Theological College, has been on placement and this has recently finished. It's a privilege to be able to offer this opportunity to people trinity at Trinity. At present we have two young ladies on placement in The Wild Goose: Zoe, from City of Bristol College, is working towards being a social worker and Sam, pictured here at our prayer time which happens each morning before the shop opens. Sam is in the middle of the picture just under our

information board (with her are [clockwise] James, Jayne, Lynn and Andy). She writes:

*"I am currently in my second year at Bristol Baptist College doing a BA (Hons) Degree in Youth and Community Work and Applied Theology. For my major placement I work as Discipleship Co-ordinator for Bath Youth for Christ. I teach hip-hop and street dance to teenage girls and teach them cookery once a week. I am involved in the management of a music and comedy café, Café Base, which runs every Friday evening.*

*As part of my course, I need to complete a 90 hour additional placement, which I have chosen to do three days a week at The Wild Goose. The aim of this is to work within a community that has a different culture, moral framework and belief to those within my major placement. I have done two weeks here so far and have found it both very challenging and enjoyable. I look forward to the rest of this experience.*

Sam Ludwell"

### **Budding poet**

We didn't realise we have a budding poet on our team! Jayne, our catering co-ordinator, pictured here in The Wild Goose, was recently involved in a creative session at a church local to where she lives, and she wrote this poem:

*You'll always be my God  
My world is full of you  
I see you face and hear  
your voice  
In everything you do  
We've shared so many moments  
The years have been so good  
I wouldn't change a single thing Even if I  
could.*

*Just like the sun without its warmth  
Like winter without frost  
That's how I feel when you're  
not here  
Without you I am lost  
So stay beside me always  
And never go away  
And I will love you constantly  
Forever and a day*

Not surprisingly, she won a prize!

## **CRISIS CENTRE AT THE BRISTOL HALF MARATHON**

The Bristol Half Marathon takes place on 2 October 2005. So far we know of six people who are running with sponsorship coming to CCM. If this is something you would like to do, please register as soon as possible. You can do this via the website [www.bristol-city.gov.uk/sports/marathon\\_index.html](http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/sports/marathon_index.html), or by contacting FR systems, phone 01782 396113, email [bristol@frsystems.co.uk](mailto:bristol@frsystems.co.uk). There is a £24 entry fee and you may wish to take this out of the money you raise for CCM. Please let us know one you are registered, if you are running for CCM.

If running in the half marathon is not your thing, then you may wish to sponsor people who are. Please get in touch with the office and we can put you in contact with one of the people who is running for us. Some of the CCM will be there on the day, encouraging those running for us and you would be welcome to join us.

## **SUPPORTING CCM**

You can support us in various ways, including:

### **SMS text giving**

You can give by sending a one off text message to smstextgiving.com charged at your normal operator's text message rates. The donations will be billed to your normal mobile telephone account.

<b>To donate £1.50 per month</b>	<b>Text "Give crisis On" to 89080</b>
<b>To donate £1.50 per week</b>	<b>Text "Give crisis W On" to 89080</b>
<b>To donate £1.50 per fortnight</b>	<b>Text "Give crisis F On" to 89080</b>
<b>To donate £1.50 once only</b>	<b>Text "Give crisis Now" to 89080</b>

If at any time you want to cease your donations to Crisis Centre Ministries, simply send a text message: "Give crisis Off" to 89080.

Please note; the quotation marks are to identify the giving instructions. They must not form any part of the text message, otherwise the keywords will not be accepted by the system.

### **Gift Aid**

This is such a good way of CCM benefiting from your giving, at no extra cost to you, if you are paying tax at the normal rate. If you are not already covenanting your giving to us, and you are paying tax, please contact the office and ask for a Gift Aid Declaration form.

### **Standing order**

We are so grateful to our many supporters who give regularly to us through bankers Standing Order. The benefit to us is that we can assess our monthly income and budget accordingly which, of course, affects our day-to-day operation and our plans for development. At present, we receive £19,860 per year through this regular giving and we would like to increase this to £30,000.

### **Meal voucher scheme**

This continues to be very successful. Individuals, groups and churches can purchase from us books of meal vouchers (£5 per book), and the individual vouchers can then be handed out to our clients on the streets. As well as providing food, the fact that the person brings the voucher into our shop means that we are able to meet with them, build relationship and offer support.

### **Food items**

We have been tremendously blessed by donations of non-perishable foods. There are also people who regularly bake for us: cakes, crumbles, puddings etc are a real treat for our clients.

If you would like to know more about being involved in this way, please contact James Preston at the office.

### **Prayer**

As often as possible, we send out prayer updates to our supporters. Thank you so much for your prayers. The needs of our clients are complex, and we do need to see God's involvement in their situations if there is to be positive change. Your prayers for everything we do make such a difference.

### **THANK YOU**

We are so grateful to all who are supporting the work of Crisis Centre Ministries in many different ways.

Specifically at this time we would like to mention:

- the Church Urban Fund whose donation helps finance the salary for James Preston

- Greater Bristol Foundation whose grants have helped cover the cost of the new toilet and flooring in the shop and the digital camera we have used for the photos in this newsletter.

## **BRISTOL HOMELESS FORUM: THE PUBLIC LAUNCH**

The Bristol Homeless Forum is part of Bristol Christian Action Network. Paul Hazelden has helped establish the Forum and is the Chair. He writes:

*In response to the homeless situation in Bristol and with a view to supporting the groups working with homeless people, Bristol Christian Action Network arranged an initial meeting in September 2001. Positive feedback from that meeting encouraged us to establish the forum as one of the regular events and this has been meeting every two months since then, operating as an informal network. It is the only meeting open to any organisation in Bristol working to address the problems of homelessness.*

*Over the past three years we have made some significant progress towards working together effectively: establishing some shared standards and guidelines, co-ordinating opening times and closure periods across different services, bringing together and publishing a good deal of information, facts and news about the problems and provision of services for homeless people (paper documents and on the website), developing a shared training programme for volunteers and other interested people and, through the meetings, discovering something of the amazing variety of organisations and projects working to help homeless people in Bristol.*

*At the start of 2005, the forum had 84 people on its mailing list drawn from 37 organisations and we agreed that the way forward included establishing a membership and simple constitution so organisations can decide whether they wish to be involved with the forum. The meetings will remain open to the public, so nobody will be disadvantaged by this development*

*For some time, we have recognised the need to raise the profile of the issue of homelessness in Bristol, to improve the public's understanding of the various related problems and to celebrate the work of the many organisations working to combat it. We are now taking the opportunity of the newly formed membership to organise a public launch – to help achieve their objectives, maybe gain some new members and also perhaps some new supporters for the member organisations.*

*If you have an interest in homeless people, please accept this as your invitation to the public launch on Friday, 15 April, 6 to 8 pm at Elim @ Bristol, Jamaica Street. Light refreshments will be provided so it would be helpful if you would please contact Ailsa McWilliam at Caring at Christmas, PO Box 14, Bristol BS99 or by email at [caringatchristmas@lineone.net](mailto:caringatchristmas@lineone.net), to let her know if you plan to come.*

*You can read more about the BCAN Homeless Forum by visiting the website – [www.bcan.org.uk/11\\_homeless.html](http://www.bcan.org.uk/11_homeless.html). Homelessness is a massive and complex problem, but by working together we can make a real difference.*

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