

Newsletter Update

Friday 21st March 2014

Stats

2,237 Streets being prayed for [See Map](#)
 225,937 Houses on those streets (101 per street)
 536,880 People living there (240 per street)

****Click here to see our research sources.**



A Prescription for Loneliness

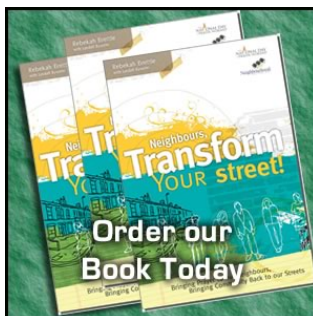
I was a GP for eight years, a doctor for a total 11 (3 years in hospital). One of the things I disliked about my job, was seeing so many lonely and isolated people. I was often their only visit for the month, or social contact for the week. The reality on the ground is that we live in a desperately lonely society, as family and friends often live miles apart and traditional family units have broken down through divorce, step families or families simply moving away. How ironic that in the communications age of FACEBOOK, TWITTER, SKYPE, many of us have never felt so lonely. Perhaps though, we are all part of the solution.

Here is a beautiful testimony of how a simple idea can be a ray of hope and community for people, who are often extremely lonely.

Should the Christian community across the UK, not be taking the lead in following the example we give you here today?

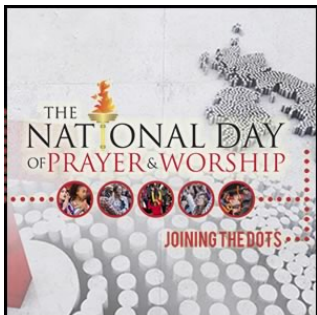
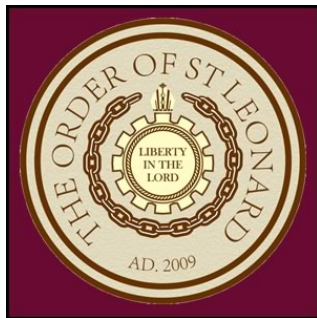


Testimony



"Crackers and Company"

Stephen from South Anston, a subscriber to our newsletter, contacted us before Christmas to tell us about something called "Crackers and Company." I asked him how it went and he told me



that 59 people who in most cases would have otherwise spent Christmas alone, attended the village hall for Christmas dinner. He told me they were planning something similar at Easter.

I phoned his home and Joanne, his wife answered and this testimony is based on a telephone interview with Joanne.

"The idea for "Crackers and Company" came from our daughter Ruby, aged 23, who involved all the family from the very start - this was always going to be a family project. We have three children, Ruby, 23, Bluebell 21 and Joseph 25. Other than Stephen, none of us are church-going Christians, but we all care deeply for our community and the vulnerable people in that community. Throughout the course of the year, we got a group of volunteers together to take the project forward - most of them were young people from the local area. We fundraised, doing bag packing in Sainsburys, trolley collections, and worked to get donations from people and organisations in the local area. We also worked in conjunction with a local homeless charity. It took a lot of planning. The final event took place in the community hall at South Anston Methodist Church.

We invited people through a poster campaign and leaflet drops to people we knew were obviously isolated, those in Care homes, and in supported accommodation. We also advertised in GP surgeries, local churches, and the local free press to identify people we thought would be spending Christmas alone.

On the day 59 people came to Christmas dinner. We had many volunteers cooking turkeys and acting as taxis to pick everyone up. At 12.30 we sat down to a Christmas dinner, with all the trimmings.



All the guests were presented with a bag of Christmas presents, all of which had been donated from local people. We ended the event with a Christmas sing along. The volunteers were mostly young people and the age range of guests varied



from 22 to late nineties - it was a great way of bridging the generational divide. Stephen's Mum and Dad and sister were amongst the volunteers who are members of the local church, but the volunteers were a cross section of people from the local area who share a concern for vulnerable and isolated people in the community. One volunteer was a soldier who had recently arrived back from serving in Afghanistan and chose to spend his Christmas day helping others!



The best thing about this day was just being part of it - we all had such a great time. It was hard work, but it was such a success that we are planning to re-invite those that came and any others and do an afternoon tea on Easter Sunday. There is so much isolation and loneliness all across the country, it would be wonderful to see this project replicated elsewhere."

Dates and Options for Street Parties:

Working with [Fusion](#), we will be working to help provide ideas of how to put this into practice over the course of the year.

Easter Weekend: Love Your Streets is suggesting people do a Street Party on Easter Weekend. www.loveyourstreets.org.uk

Friday 30th May- Sunday 8th June 2014:
www.pentecostfestival.co.uk The Biggest Birthday Party Ever.

June 1st: The Big Lunch www.thebiglunch.com Since 2009, thousands of Big Lunches have taken place in all types of community across the UK. Last year 3.65 million people took to their streets, gardens and community spaces for the fifth annual Big Lunch

July/August/ September: Have a **HI Tea**: Hello with a cup of tea). Neighbourhood Prayer Network is suggesting people have a HI Tea where people invite their neighbours to a church hall or another venue, working with your church community and provide a traditional afternoon tea with nice plates and tea cups and cakes free of charge. We believe this is a lovely way to get to know neighbours and work together within your church for the sake of your community. We will explain more about this over time.

Christmas: A Crackers and Company style event in your local community at Christmas as detailed above.

Neighbour Friday

MATT 7:7

Forty Day Prayer Guide for Lent
www.neighbourhoodprayer.net/pray

Caring For Our Neighbours

Tip 1: invite some neighbours to a planning meeting in your home with someone else from your church.

Tip 2: Set a date for your coffee morning, Street party, barbecue, Big Lunch, HI Tea, (Hello and a Cuppa), The Biggest Birthday Party or Christmas party.



In partnership with [Love Your Streets](#), we are hoping as many people as possible will tweet or Facebook the #do1nicething suggestion.

https://uj.constantcontact.com/visualeditor/visual_editor_preview.jsp?agent.uid=1116875128398&format=html&printFrame=true

you can be thankful for in your neighbourhood #Do1NiceThing

22nd March - Buy Fairtrade where you can today #Do1NiceThing

23rd March - Take a single person (elderly person, single mum...) out for Sunday lunch #Do1NiceThing

24th March - Buy seeds ready to create a wildlife garden (or tub or window box!) #Do1NiceThing

25th March - Commit to collect used stamps for The Leprosy Mission #Do1NiceThing

26th March - Catch a bus (#Do1NiceThing for the environment) and say thank you to the bus driver #Do1NiceThing

27th March - Give a drink to a homeless person or take part in 'Suspended Coffee' (www.suspendedcoffees.com) #Do1NiceThing

Sharing Jesus with Our Neighbours

Word for Today and Father's Love Letter Distribution Over Lent



We are hoping that many of you will distribute the Father's Love Letter, together with a copy of the Word For Today to your neighbours. Ideally when you given them out, write, TO (and the name of your neighbour and FROM (your house number), or the details of your church. Only write your name on the envelope if you know your neighbour well. It might be good to give them a Easter card and a small present if you are able this Easter. It is likely to be more enjoyable if you work with others in your church and please tell your church leader what you are doing. This activity is not suitable for children under 18 unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Here is what some people are saying about the Word for Today and the Father's Love Letter.

Order the Father's Love Letter & Gift Edition of the Word For Today to give out to your neighbours. Ordering copies is free of charge

and an excellent way of blessing your neighbours. Phone 08456040401 to order your copies.



*in our villages,
towns and cities*



**CROSSING
LONDON**

And/Or Order a copy of a Sharing Jesus book



HOPE & Crossing London have produced a resource called Sharing Jesus which I am currently reading myself. This new book continues to inspire me. Buy Sharing Jesus from us for £3 per book www.neighbourhoodprayer.net/book

Upcoming Events

Heart of Community Training Days 29th March

Jenny Bailey (a trustee) on 15th March and I, on 1st March had a great time sharing about Neighbourhood Prayer Network at the Community Training days, being run by FUSION, as part of Crossing London and HOPE.



Beverly Killa, another one of our five trustees, is working very hard towards her presentation at this event on Saturday 29th. If you can go to this great event please do and encourage Bev as she is a little nervous!

South East London

Saturday 29 March, 10.30am to 4pm

New Life Centre Croydon.

5 Cairo New Road, Croydon CR0 1XP

- See more at: <http://www.crossinglondon.co.uk/church-heart-of-community#sthash.S8CDSv7w.dpuf>

Marty Woods from Fusion Youth and Fusion community Europe, Lucy Moore from Messy Church, Roy Crowne from HOPE, Andy Frost, Crossing London, Rebekah Brettle, Neighbourhood Prayer Network (Other members of our team will represent Rebekah Brettle on 15th and 29th March).

Register online at eventbrite.co.uk, search for 'Heart of Community and select your venue' - See more at: <http://www.crossinglondon.co.uk/church-heart-of-community#sthash.S8CDSv7w.dpuf>

Please help us if you are able.

We can only continue our work with the generosity of people's time, skills, prayers and financial support. I strongly dislike asking for money, wishing instead we could serve you and not need to ask. The reality is we do need a financial breakthrough. Thanks to all of you, who have already donated. Can you help?

The real cost of running Neighbourhood Prayer Network, is over £2000/month. If we are to see our vision of every street covered in prayer across the UK with many people becoming Christian, we urgently need regular donations to prepare for an expected surge in growth. We need to get the word out to more people and build on the success the Lord has allowed so far. We want to produce flyers, produce resources for churches and engage more staff and volunteers to help roll out the vision across the country.

If you are not in a position to donate, please know that we value your prayer and support in other ways. If you are able to donate, all donations of any size are greatly appreciated:

We need three things to happen

1) We are looking for 40 churches to donate £25 per month and in

doing so become pioneer partner churches.

2) We are looking for 100 people to donate £5 per month.

3) We are looking for 50 people to donate £10 per month.

Are you able to choose which one you could help with ?

Click here to donate via stewardship so they can claim gift aid on our behalf

or if you are not a UK tax payer:

Donate directly to:

Neighbourhood Prayer Network

HSBC Bank

Sort Code: 40-42-12

Account number: 22285975

Please send us your testimonies of what God is doing in your church and Neighbourhood and any ideas you have to reach out to your neighbours.

Every Blessing



Rebekah Brettle

P.S. Don't forget to click on the block advert links to some of our great partners (on the left).

Neighbourhood Prayer Network is a registered Charity: Charity Number 1150306, established 31st December 2012

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