



Lincoln Street, Lawrence Hill, Bristol, BS5 0BJ

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Opening times

Mon, Tues, Weds 10.00am-3.00pm, Thurs 1.15-3.00pm

A Note from the Assistant Manager

Many thanks to everyone for their support for the BMC in these uncertain times. We remain grateful as ever for all your prayers, donations and backing. The cost-of-living crisis on top of a post-COVID environment has been a challenging time for everyone. This has been especially true for the Bristol Methodist Centre (BMC), which has faced some demanding times recently.

The BMC will be meeting the new operational challenges by beginning a process of restructuring of its current staffing arrangements in order to increase its fluidity of service and continue to provide the necessary practical help to all our guests. A huge part of this reorganisation will be the recruitment of many more volunteers to fill an array of positions within the BMC (please see over). New volunteers will join a well-trained and dedicated staff team committed to supporting vulnerable adults from across the city. I can guarantee that this is not just interesting work but also vital to the city and how our greater social environment develops. Alongside this it is can also be extremely fun and rewarding.

Since 1924 the Methodist Church has supported people in the city who are most in need and it is our aim at the BMC that this continues well into the future. Since COVID service provision is in increasing demand across the city. The work of our staff and volunteers has never been more needed in these difficult times. Our operational ambition remains stronger than ever, and it is our dearest hope to introduce a new wave of volunteers to the project and welcome them to the BMC 'family' of dedicated workers.

Chris Keegan

A Message from the Management Committee

Dear Methodist Centre Supporters,

You will probably be aware that Bristol Methodist Centre has been facing very difficult times recently, therefore the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit has been in discussion with a charity in the city with a view to partnering in the running of the Centre. Although an initial business proposal has not worked out, the charity has offered to work with the Circuit and the Methodist Centre to explore and assess options for

the future of the Centre. The Circuit Meeting recently agreed to take up this offer and to receive a report no later than June 2023.

The Circuit as a whole, and the Methodist Centre in particular, continues to face great financial and organisational challenges. At the same time as exploring future options, therefore, costs must be reduced. For this reason, the Circuit Meeting also agreed to proceed with a redundancy consultation with the staff of the BMC to restructure the team and reduce current running costs. The need to make these savings does not detract from the loss that will be felt by everyone as we anticipate saying goodbye to a few members of staff over the next few months. In our next newsletter we will be able to say more about this.

We recognise the huge amount of commitment and support that is given to the Methodist Centre by staff, volunteers, church members and others. Thank you for your work, prayers and giving. We ask you to stand alongside those who are vulnerable and suffering from homelessness in Bristol by continuing to pray, to give and to volunteer, now more than ever.

Bristol Methodist Centre Management Committee

Methodist Centre Mailing List

We have decided to switch from mailing newsletters in the post, to using email. We are therefore seeking to build up our email list. You may have received this letter via your church or another supporter – we invite you to sign up to receive future newsletters directly to your inbox. [Please email manager@methodist-centre.org.uk](mailto:manager@methodist-centre.org.uk) and ask to be added.

If you know of other BMC supporters, please check that they have received this letter and pass it on to them if they have not. Thank you for bearing with us while we make this change!

A message from our guest, Alan Russell

First of all I would like to express my gratitude to the staff of The Methodist Centre. Thank you very much for all that you have and continue to do for me and others in my situation.

When looking at the service as a provider some of the benefits are obvious. However when perceived on a deeper level it is so much more.

The effect of taking a hot shower and being able to change into clean clothes is, obviously, physically healthy and hygienic. What this provides emotionally and psychologically can be overlooked. It is difficult to express the low self-worth I and I imagine others in a similar situation to myself, have felt. Arriving at the centre dirty and ashamed, sometimes with suicidal thoughts. The difference attitude, after a shower has been phenomenal. I have felt reinvigorated. I have transitioned from a place of not belonging, less than a human being, a pathetic excuse of existence, into a happy man regaining a sense of pride. A human being with hope for the future.

Being able to charge my phone has enabled me to maintain contact with my family. Also it has been vital in accessing other services, such as the job centre, G.P., homeless help, etc.

The centre also provides a safe place to meet others who are, or have been, in a similar situation to myself. In this environment I have made friends and gained acquaintances. Meeting other service users has also led to sharing information. What to do, where to go for support, etc.

The most important hidden value, in plain sight, is the staff. It is plain to see that they genuinely care about the service they provide and the people that they attend the centre. The staff at the Methodist Centre are special people who deliver a service that fits a diverse range of people. I have never felt looked down upon, by any of them. Another thing that impresses me is that I have not once noticed that the colour of my skin has affected the way in which I've been treated or viewed.

Attendance at the centre has played a significant part in my recovery, on all levels, physically, emotionally and psychologically. I cannot thank you enough. From the broken man, who first entered your doors, many moons ago. And the man I am today.

Thank you with all my heart and spirit,

Alan Russell

Giving to the Methodist Centre

We are so grateful for all the different ways that you give faithfully to the work and mission of the Methodist Centre, with your time, prayers, gifts of food and clothing, and gifts of money. It costs (very approximately) £800 per day to keep the Centre and all its services available to guests – you make a huge

difference with all that you give. For those who are able, setting up a standing order is a great way to help, enabling the Centre to plan ahead financially. And for those who pay tax, Gift Aid enables the Centre to receive an extra 25p from the Government for each £1.00 donated. For more details, please check our website or phone/email us to request a form. Thank you so much!
<http://www.methodist-centre.org.uk/support-us>

Volunteering

We are looking to recruit more volunteers to help at the Centre, for example helping with listening, laundry, sorting donations of food or clothing, chaplaincy, gardening and computer support. Having more volunteer help will release our fantastic staff to do more support work (e.g. liaising with local authorities, mental health services, key workers etc. on behalf of guests). Volunteers must be 18 or over. If you are interested, please contact the Centre to arrange to visit in the first instance and get a feel for the opportunities. Training and support will be given.

Items Needed:

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| Tinned minced beef and onions | Squash |
| Tinned stewed steak | Tinned corned beef |
| Powdered mashed potato | Tinned potatoes |
| Tinned rice pudding | Tinned custard |
| Individually wrapped biscuits | Washing powder |
| Men's jogging bottoms, all sizes | Gloves |
| Men's jeans size 30- & 32-inch waist | |

Please, no tuna, pasta, tomatoes or baked beans – we have enough for now!

Ambassadors

Does your church have a Methodist Centre Ambassador? If you are interested, please contact the Centre. Ambassadors receive brief a monthly update from the Centre by email, and commit to sharing news, prayer requests and Centre needs with their local congregation. The Ambassador scheme is open to any supporting church.

We invite you to join us in praying for:

- A sustainable future for the Methodist Centre – resources to meet our needs.
- Inspired and fruitful thinking about future options.
- Centre staff as they serve guests through a period of change.
- More volunteers to help at the Centre.
- A good outcome from pending grant applications.
- The Centre to be a place where people meet Jesus and grow in faith.