



**LINCOLN STREET
Lawrence Hill
Bristol BS5 0BJ**

Tel: 0117 955 5606

manager@methodist-centre.org.uk

Drop-in centre open

Monday: 1.15–3.30pm

Tues–Thur: 10am–3.30pm

Breakfast – 10–11am

Lunch – 12.30–1.30pm

Charity Shop Open

Mon–Thur: 10am–4.30pm

Tel: 0117 907 9875

138 Church Road

Redfield

Bristol

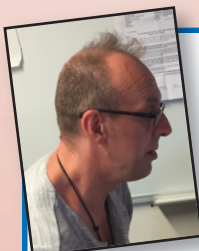
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Who we are

The Bristol Methodist Centre is a Christian community offering shelter, sanctuary and support to homeless and vulnerable people. The Centre provides a drop-in service where people can get free meals, clean clothes and a shower. Support staff are on hand each day to help with various problems; and guests are welcome to take part in the regular pattern of prayer and worship in the small chapel. Guests are also able to use phones, or charge their own as well as make use of the internet. The work is funded entirely by voluntary contributions and we receive no local authority funding.

Items for Christmas

Coffee	Biscuits	Socks
Fruit Flavoured Squash	Instant Mash	Thermal Hats / Gloves
Tinned Minced Beef	Tinned Potatoes	/scarfs for men.
Tinned Steak	Stuffing	Shampoo
Tinned Tomatoes	Hot Chocolate	Roll on Deodorants /
Custard	Milk Powder	Razors
Evaporated Milk	UHT Milk	URGENTLY NEEDED
Tinned Vegetables: carrots/ peas / mixed veg	Sugar	Tents
Tinned Ham	Chocolate Spread	
Corn Beef	Peanut Butter	If it's not on this list then
Chocolate bars (Mars / Snickers / Twix etc)	Stock Cubes	it is because we already
	Writing Pads	have plenty of those
	Boxer Shorts m/s only	items



Christmas is traditionally associated with being the season of good will and a time of understanding and compassion. Sadly, to some of the most vulnerable members of society there has been little in the way of good will in terms of how they treat each other and these cold winter months offer very little in terms of compassion. Certainly projects and agencies like ours strive to make the lives of vulnerable people better especially in the run up to Christmas but life on the streets for rough sleepers has become increasingly hard over this last 12 months with an escalation in bullying and intimidation driven by the increasingly desperate situation with regards homelessness and a retraction of social care services across the city.

Bullying and aggressive intimidation are now major issues nationwide and major cities such as Bristol is now seeing an increase of such activities on an unprecedented scale. There are many reasons for such an increase but moreover the harder people's lives get the more extreme people's behaviour becomes can often lead previously rationally minded individuals into doing things that they would otherwise never consider. Homelessness in particular can often lead to a deterioration in mental health and increased anxiety and panic. This in turn can lead an individual exhibiting aggressive behaviour towards those around them including people who are in exactly the same position as themselves.

Changes to the benefit system, particularly those involved in the sanctioning of money and eligibility, have helped create a much more volatile atmosphere that has inevitably led to confrontation. The lack of hostel places or other accommodation has exacerbated this situation leaving the most in need more vulnerable and others open to the idea of using aggressive behaviours in order to maintain their day to day existence. Such challenging behaviour has led to a series of issues well known to agencies like ours as well as the NHS and the local authority. The 'cuckooing' of council flats etc by individuals who should not be there as always been a problem but in recent months it has become a much more prominent issue. Safe guarding regarding individuals who are being bullied, assaulted and even forced out on the street to beg is becoming a regular occurrence and the Bristol Methodist Centre has been at the forefront in dealing with some of these cases.

It is easy seemingly easy to separate the bullies from the bullied and declare their behaviour as abhorrent and inexcusable. Yet the bullies themselves are subject to pressures and intimidation which in turn makes them victim to either others or sets of circumstances that they simply cannot control. The truth of the matter is that some perpetrators are not always operating from a sadistic perspective but are driven to such actions by their own inability to manage their lives making them as vulnerable as those they choose to victimise. Such appalling behaviour cannot go unpunished and having chosen a course of action then the bully must face the consequences. It does, however, remain vitally important that we understand what is happening from as many different perspectives as possible if we are ever to resolve this situation.

The more goodwill we at the centre promote the more our client group are encouraged to treat each other with greater respect and affection. Our aim at the centre to help those in need and this Christmas we will be reminding everyone that goodwill and peace to all men is not a seasonal attributes but in these hard times it is a necessary yearlong requirement.

Chris Keegan



Christmas 2018



It is that time of year again where we look back on the year that has been and turn our focus to our saviour, the Prince of Peace and his birth into a world that needed his presence to break the chains of sin and chaos. At this time of year I am always reminded of the three wise men, how they travelled from far and wide to bring such extravagant gifts, how they honoured the saviour in such lavish ways – offering all that they could, no matter the cost, no matter the journey and no matter the risk.

The Harvest donations we received this year have been incredible, churches, individuals and organisations offering help from the overflow of their blessings and once again it showcases how much the centres work has impacted the hearts and minds of those who have taken our message of hope for the homeless and vulnerable to heart and with your continued support we are able to continue to offer the best day centre provision in Bristol and care for the homeless and vulnerable like no other service.

This past year has been huge for the centre, we have been on the news, both the BBC and ITV talking about the work of the centre, we have hosted the Bristol launch of the Next Meal app (an app dedicated to helping those who are homeless find out what is available to them – and also empowering and educating the community on how to offer help and support). We have also been working and embedding ourselves within the local community with art projects which have been attended by our guest and benefiting the locale – such as our project in the local park where guests worked on bug boxes. We have also been working with UWE and other art / literacy groups to bring some soft skill sessions to the centre to complement our already quality provision of support, advice and care – being able to see our guests enjoy these projects has been delightful.

It's a very exciting time for the centre as we look to

develop and continue moving our provision forwards and we are thrilled that we are still supported by all of you. As I was writing this piece for the Christmas magazine a song by Matt Redman seemed to stick with me and I feel that this is from God so I share this with you now and hope that it will move some of you the way it has for me in the last few weeks.

Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring
To so faithful a Friend, to so loving a King?
Savior, what can be said, what can be sung
As a praise of Your name for the things You have done?
Oh, my words could not tell, not even in part
Of the debt of love that is owed by this thankful heart

MATT REDMAN – I Will Offer Up My Life

This song pulled on my heart strings '*Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring*' this phrase in particular had me thinking about what can I give and what can I bring to the lives of those I work with on a daily basis and I feel that it could also move you too – if you let it sink in. It's not about me asking you for more, because you have already donated more than we could ever imagine, but what else could you give, could you give some time over to prayer, could you advocate the work of the centre, could you challenge the negative stereotypes of the homeless, could you volunteer, could you tell the homeless you may meet about where to find us, could you fundraise for the centre with your home group or church – could you offer hope to those who believe life is hopeless?

It is a challenge for all of us, I know for one I am up to this challenge....who is with me?

I would also like to take this time to wish you all a happy Christmas and a joy filled New Year – our door at the centre is always open so if you would like to pop in and see the work that we are doing in the New Year, please, please, please do come and see this first hand!

Ross Jeffery – Centre Manager