

SEPTEMBER 2023

A wet but warm welcome.

Hello, supporters, prayer warriors and new subscribers. It appears winter has finally arrived, and as it blusters in with rain and cold snaps, with frost and wind, it reminds me that our work is only just beginning. When winter shows up, our thoughts (as well as many of yours, I'm assuming) turn towards our many guests who are suffering through homelessness and those who can't escape the harsh conditions.

This newsletter will include some important new changes we are looking to put into place this year to help those in most need during the severe weather which often turns up around October through to February.

There are also updates on other areas of the work here at the Bristol Methodist Centre, as well as a prayer and reflection by David Deeks for Churches to use for World Homelessness Day on the 10th of October.

I also wanted to offer my heartfelt thanks, and the thanks of all the staff and guests for your ongoing support and charitable giving, which has really helped the centre over this past year. We couldn't have done half of the work here without your support, so thank you!

Please continue to remember us in your prayers, may God reveal himself in new ways to you as we - together - seek to understand his heart for the future of the BMC, its guests and the City of Bristol.

Ross

A NEW CHARITY

Over the summer, the transition group set up by Bristol and South Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit Meeting has been working hard on the task of enabling the BMC to be transferred to a new charitable body.

Progress has been made - some very capable trustees for the new charity have been recruited, work has begun on legal matters relating to the new charity and the Lincoln Street building, plans for developing the building have been refined and a start has been made on the groundwork for future grant applications. We value your prayers for the continuing preparation for transfer.

It's a bit like two trains running alongside each other - the new train (the new charity) needs to get up to speed alongside the old train (the Circuit) so that the BMC can jump from one to the other without losing any momentum. That probably sounds a bit more "James Bond" than it should, but you get the idea!

A reflection and prayer for World Homeless Day, 10 October 2023

Thank you to David Deeks for providing this reflection and prayer and we hope that you will be able to use this for a moment of focus during your services around the 10th of October to highlight this day and the many people around the world struggling with homelessness and not just in the City of Bristol.

Reflection

World Homeless Day highlights the global challenges of people suffering homelessness. And helps to define a common aim: to enable those without homes or with a fragile stake in a home to move forward to a new chapter in their lives, where the threat of homelessness evaporates. The Bristol Methodist Centre (BMC), along with many other projects in the Bristol area, is making a hugely significant contribution to that end.

The Day also inspires all Christian people to be grateful for the shelter, warmth and security of their homes.

Prayer

Spirit of Jesus, you are always available to everyone, with unconditional Love; you are unambiguously committed to sustaining and nurturing the lives of all. For this we praise you. Through the words of Jesus, you inspire us to open our hearts to you in trust.

We thank you for helping us to discern your presence in the guests of the BMC, among staff and volunteers at the Centre, and in the generous donors who support the work financially. Plant in our hearts an ever-growing desire to support this ministry of compassion, justice and healing.

Increase our compassion, empathy and generosity towards everyone we meet, especially those in greatest need.

Grant your wisdom and hope to those who are working towards the next phase of BMC's ministry, developing many fruitful partnerships in support of people suffering from homelessness, widening the provision available at the Centre, and encouraging more people and organisations to give generously towards its work. Amen.

HARVEST DONATIONS

It always amazes me when Harvest rolls around and I see the giving hearts of so many displayed in the financial and physical gifts to the centre. It always warms my heart when I see the overflow of giving in our storeroom and the beaming smiles on the faces of people who are making these

donations, it without fail, turns my eyes and thoughts upwards to our God in Heaven who lavishes us with every good and wonderful thing.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to the centre during Harvest, your support and giving are really making a difference... thank you!

CHANGES TO THE WEBSITE - Please note that there have been some changes to the website for The Bristol Methodist Centre - there is now a section on the website where we have items of need for the centre. This list is added to regularly.

There are two options here, we can always use monetary donations, to purchase the items we need, but if you would prefer to get physical items for the centre, please check on the website and you can see the items which are in demand.

Once again, thank you to everyone who donates to the BMC all of your giving goes to helping those in need.

A huge thank you to Bob Walters who keeps this website up to date!

SWEP - Severe Weather Emergency Protocol

Bristol Methodist Centre is preparing to take part in SWEP provision this year for the first time. When the temperature is forecast to be below zero for three

nights in a row, or there is an amber weather warning for wind and rain for three nights in a row, then SWEP is activated and the City Council finds emergency hostel accommodation for rough sleepers. The BMC is liaising with the lead charity, and a team of volunteers is preparing so that, when the time comes, our day room can be converted to a camp-bed dormitory and back again the next morning.

We expect to receive some payment from the Council towards the cost of hosting. It will be great to be part of SWEP provision this year, but at the same time we want to make sure that we continue to deliver a high standard of day-time service in the midst of a busy winter. And we expect greater daytime footfall as a result of being part of SWEP. So we are very grateful for your generosity which means that, while we get ready to open our doors on cold nights, the resilience of our day-time provision is maintained. This probably sounds a bit bureaucratic! But it comes down to people staying warm and well. Thank you for helping to make that happen.

There is a lot to plan and organise, so please do keep all of this in your prayers - as this will be a lifesaving venture, and we want it to be yet another jewel in the crown of the provision we offer to those suffering from homelessness in Bristol.

October Newsletter

We will be providing more information in October about our Christmas plans and fundraising - so please encourage people to sign up for our Newsletter, so they can get all this important information directly to their inboxes.

They can do so [here](#).