



London City Mission, Alan Black Director of Studies, Deputy CEO

Almost all our field staff are still working full time; we have only furloughed a few head office staff. Thankfully the few members of staff who contracted Covid19 have recovered. Webber Street our homeless centre is closed to guests but still ministers food and encouragement every week day. We were blessed by one of our 'guests' writing a letter to the Evening Standard saying what a life saver it was to receive kindness through our ministry every day. "On behalf of the homeless community around Waterloo station in London, who have had to remain on the streets during lockdown, I would like to thank the staff and volunteers of Webber Street Day Centre. Every morning we have been provided with food and much needed toiletries. They do not always have an easy time dealing with the frustrations that have manifested themselves during this crisis, yet their response is always one of love, kindness and good humour. Without them, life would have been so much tougher. I love you all."

Evangelism to the least reached continues through on line conversations and Bible studies. One of our missionaries had the joy of leading a man to faith over several weeks in this way and then discovering he lived in the same street.



Following Jesus where the need is greatest, Ann Hill

Coronavirus Emergency Appeal. In response to the current pandemic, Tearfund is working with partners in 45 of the world's poorest countries to inform communities how to protect themselves from Covid-19. This work is essential as health care is often inadequate and out of reach of poor communities. In South Sudan for example, there are 4 ventilators for a population of 12 million. Tearfund's emphasis is on providing education about symptoms and social distancing, and provision of soap, detergent, and hand sanitizer, as well as food parcels for families self-isolating. Good handwashing is only possible if there is water so Tearfund also helps communities with improved infrastructure such as taps and tanks. From its experience with Ebola, Tearfund knows the importance of church leaders as trusted conduits for advice, support and information in their communities. Tearfund has already sent out hygiene training guidelines to 250 partners with an outreach to 15,000 churches and their communities, and resources are continually being developed and translated and published on [Tearfund Learn](#). Please pray for:

- God's comfort to those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, and for those feeling isolated by being in lockdown
- families in countries with no social welfare where being in lockdown means no longer being able to earn enough for food and the risk of starvation
- Tearfund and other aid organisations to be able get food, financial aid and emotional support to those in need
- leadership and support from wealthier governments to assist poorer nations meet the basic needs of their people.



Greenwich Street Pastors, Christine Legg

With the advent of lockdown, Greenwich Street Pastors have been unable to go out on the streets of Woolwich on a Friday night. We await the next Government announcement to see if this will change. There are two training sessions each year and the March session was delayed and we pray that the September session will take place in some form.

- Please pray for all of our Greenwich Street Pastors; for those in self-isolation; for those still working (some of whom are key workers) and those working from home.
- Please pray for all the rough sleepers/homeless people that GSP meet on a regular basis in Woolwich. We hope that they have been found, at the very least, temporary accommodation whilst this virus crisis is so prevalent.
- Please pray for all the small business owners in Woolwich who have been forced to close – we pray that they will be able to rebuild their businesses in time.

St John's Mission Newsletter

Reaching out at home and overseas

Mission Sunday 7th Jun2020



Go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you

Matthew 28:18-20



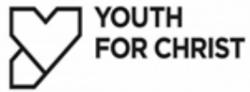
Sports Chaplaincy UK, Matt Baker, National Director for England
 twitter @gambettola68 and Sports Chaplaincy UK @sportchaplaincy

Well how things have changed since the last update when we entered the New Year, as it says in Proverbs 19:21 "Many are the plans in a person's heart,

but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails." By that I'm not suggesting God has purposed this pandemic but the plans in my heart for 2020 are certainly having to change as I try to discern His ongoing purpose for Sports Chaplaincy and sport. Chaplaincy has continued over the last few months with chaplains learning to support individuals & clubs remotely, taking the form of phone calls, Zoom, social media & websites. At a local level I have had the privilege of taking a weekly Zoom bible study & prayer time with some of the Charlton players and it has been excellent to see their faith developing. With many staff being furloughed I have been in regular contact with HR, making sure that any staff feeling vulnerable are OK by giving them a call. I have also helped the club's Community Trust in finding volunteers to assist with their support hub & I'm grateful to those from the church who volunteered. One thing that still took place was our 3rd National Sports Sunday on 17th May. Although the nature of this was different, with so many churches more technically aware it meant our videos encouraging people to pray for sport at this time and our social media presence was very effective.

Nationally sport is tentatively being planned again though we wait to see what form it will take including football in the Premier League & Championship. Concerns are widespread in sport including fears that some clubs & organisations will cease to exist in the next year as it will be impossible for them to make up for the loss of finances. With this in mind I am discussing with chaplains the two areas I think we are likely to need to support people in. One is regarding mental health with the likely increase in issues as people try to deal with anxiety and depression as they face the future. The other area is grief. This pandemic has created grief at many levels, whether with the loss of relationship with others, the loss of job or finances or the death of a loved one. As chaplains and indeed as the church whilst we are in the midst of this grief ourselves we need to support, comfort and journey with others through this time. To quote a recent sermon I heard somewhere "we need to press in to our relationship with Jesus and allow our capacity for compassion to increase!"

- Give thanks for the success of National Sports Sunday & the traction this got in churches
- Give thanks for the bible studies with some of the Charlton players during lockdown and pray that these will continue
- Please pray for all those in sport, particularly those facing an uncertain future caused by the effects of the pandemic
- Pray for all those grieving at different losses and that they might find Jesus as the source of their comfort and strength
- Please continue to pray for Charlton Athletic, the club is still in turmoil regarding ownership and finances
- Pray for all of us involved in Sports Chaplaincy UK that we may discern the Lord's purposes for us in sport and how we might equip our chaplains to carry this out



Youth For Christ, Neil O'Boyle, National Director

"I have just sent all of our staff home and we are closing the doors, and while our circumstances have changed our mission remains the same..."

They were Neil's closing words to a video that was sent out to thousands of people linked to Youth for Christ on the 20th of March. Before closing the doors, the team had worked hard to reposition themselves to engage in a completely different way for this season. Millions of young people suddenly went into isolation! The need to bring hope, connect and share Jesus was just as great!

Our Church Resources teams reshaped all of their resources to now work virtually for youth groups across the nation operating via the internet. As well as producing family survival packs to keep everyone sane and together. Our digital evangelists YouTube site received national recognition from the Police Youth agency for its creativity helping young people in this season. RE:Quest which has recently received endorsements from the government Department for Education for its Religious Education website, went into overdrive providing teaching curriculum for RE teachers to now use virtually. One group of young people who were in lock down long before the pandemic continue to receive support, our prisons team visit on a regular basis to take good news to those in young offender institutes.

Finally, many Youth for Christ staff across the nation are still in schools every week providing support for staff who are teaching children of essential workers, and when we are unable to get into schools we have provided school assemblies and classes virtually for schools operating online.

Our circumstances have changed but our mission remains the same. We will continue to adapt and adjust for as long as we can, some of our staff have had to go on furlough, some Centres have needed to hibernate and we have already seen a drop by as much as 50-60% in giving but we press on as best we can because young people in this season matter just as much as ever.

Lock down for the O'Boyle's has been no different to anyone else across the nation. Molly and Maisey home school from the kitchen, Lucy serves the Youth for Christ media team from her bedroom, Joy continues her Counselling degree from under the stairs rather than college, and Neil's office is now in the front room with dodgy Wi-Fi connections. Jake should have graduated from his MA last week and the plan was to attend the celebrations in Chicago, but college went virtual by mid-March and he with Grace (his wife) left shortly afterwards to Phoenix (which is where she is from) to stay with her family before Illinois closed the State. He has however submitted all of his paperwork and awaits his grade.

It is a nerve wracking time to lead a charity the size and scale of Youth for Christ but the mission is strong and the need is compelling and we place our trust in God. We want to thank St. Johns for its continual support to us. We are so grateful. The O'Boyle family.



Greenwich Youth For Christ

Due to the closure of local schools and the suspension of face to face activities in churches, Greenwich Youth for Christ made the decision to furlough both Joe (Director) and Lauren (Girls Worker), from the beginning of April. Helen our part time office manager has been working from home dealing with finances, communications and emails. We are hugely grateful to our supporter who have continued to support the organisation financially through these challenging times. Please pray:

- For the staff team during this time
- For the young people we engaged with in the schools and open access clubs in churches, that we may soon find ways to restart our face to face work



Mara Diocese in Tanzania , Elizabeth Fleetwood

Nursery school Porridge

This scheme provides porridge every morning to the 9 Nursery schools set up by the Mother's Union. Children come to school hungry and the provision of porridge helps them to concentrate which gives them a greater advantage in their education. We know that these children are more advanced in their learning when they move on to Primary school. Bishop George writes that the Mother's Union is doing well with this ministry

Covid-19

We have sent a gift to the diocese for the purchase of buckets, soap, hand sanitizers, protective gloves and masks for each of the congregations.

Bishop George writes, "We are sad to hear about the loss of life of one member of St John's Blackheath parish. We do mourn with you and pray for comfort to his loved ones left behind. This "world is not our home" we certainly all go to rest with Jesus in our heavenly home.

We in Mara so far have lost none of our members, except on other diseases. And since we know there is no medication for Covid-19 we concentrate on creating awareness and providing to the poor parishioners protective facilities. The fight against this pandemic continues. To be honest with our health facilities here, when Covid-19 attacks many will die. God forbid! So your prayers are needed

Please pray for

- Wisdom for Bishop George and his leadership team in the diocese as they teach on the importance of hand washing etc in the fight against covid-19
- For the health of the children especially for protection when going to school
- For the Tanzania health facilities



Neema Crafts, Iringa Tanzania

Ben & Katy Ray

For the safety of our staff and community we've decided to shut down the Neema Centre until such a point as it seems safe to re-open. This was not an easy decision, especially as there are few reported cases currently in Tanzania, but one that we think will keep us ahead of the infection curve, with the pandemic likely to hit hard when it does.

Whilst the Centre is closed Neema Crafts has been able to find a way for our staff team, who are people with disabilities, to work from home by producing a range of PPE for local hospitals and other front-line workers.

It is unlikely that tourists will be returning to Tanzania any time soon, while the situation is so uncertain. Ben is considering branching out into, perhaps, making more furniture for the more permanent residents to purchase.

To find out more about the PPE scheme and how you can get involved click on the link below: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-BUJFPPyuKd0pQFPmPuYwti_oyvOoqn/view?usp=sharing

Please pray

- For the continued health and well-being of Ben, Katy and their children as well as the staff team
- For donations for the masks to be sufficient to keep paying their staff until other options are found
- For the development and production of items for sale to more long-term residents rather than tourists to support the sustainability of the work of Neema Crafts