

Winter Newsletter 2020 Thanksgiving and Adapting

Dear Supporters,

Welcome to our Winter newsletter. As we write this, we are mid-lockdown and the days are drawing in, yet we have so much to be thankful for! We know that God sees and cares for every individual on the planet and we get to witness and be part of displaying a small portion of His love through word and deed to many in our city.



A Marathon Year

For many of us, this year has felt like a marathon, however, few people have had the chance to complete one! Bev, our Rest Homes Team Leader, attempted to run her first marathon earlier this year when Brighton Food Bank were gifted two runner places by Brighton marathon organisers. Bev had run the Brighton half marathon in February, so she felt confident in bringing home a medal for us!

Due to the pandemic, the usual marathon event had to be cancelled and, instead, a virtual marathon was offered. What's a virtual marathon? Well you do have to run, but on your own, rather than with thousands of others at an event. Bev sustained a running injury during training, but this did not stop her! The virtual marathon meant that she could run the distance in segments rather than all in one go. Despite her injury, Bev completed the full 26.2 miles in early October and received her well deserved finishers medal. She hopes that next year she will be able to run the real thing!



If you would like to sponsor Bev to support the food bank and help her meet her target please visit: <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/bevandian>

Adapting to Serve

Brighton Food Bank have continued to adapt how they do things. COVID-19 has meant that face to face contact with their clients has been restricted, however Jesus' love has still been shown to those in need. Our team have been able to give ongoing food parcels to those referred to us and one-off emergency bags of food to those facing a temporary food shortage. Here's a snapshot of what our team have been up to recently...

Whether it be an ongoing client or someone in an emergency situation, the process starts with a phone call, each of which are unique. Many are struggling and a friendly voice is a lifeline, especially for those who do not have anyone else to talk to. We have great catch up chats, prayer requests, and some laughs! We ask each person if they have any allergies and what they don't like to eat, which avoids food wastage of unwanted items, and if they require any additional items such as toiletries. Sometimes, we have the opportunity to add in extra items donated, such as toys, or even pot plants, to add that element of a lovely surprise!

Thanks to your generous donations we have been able to deliver over 2 500 food parcels since the beginning of the pandemic!

Being able to deliver food parcels to people is a real blessing! One client suffers from COPD, but faithfully watches from their flat window for the arrival of the taxi van; before our delivery team reach their door, the client is outside ready to receive their box for which they are so grateful. Another client suffers with mental health issues, but always has a smile on their face when our team arrive; they love to chat and always ask to keep the boxes that our team deliver the food in as they are building themselves a bookcase! After hearing this from one of our former clients, our team was blown away by the impact our deliveries are having on those in crisis and believe God is in every food parcel:

“Please do not underestimate the amazing love that comes with your food parcel. I unexpectedly found myself in need and I received a friendly phone call from the team in which I shared I had a gluten free diet. When that first parcel arrived, I could not believe how much care and consideration was taken to ensure I had a variety of meals covered. I felt overwhelmed with joy, because I could see how much care and thought was put into deciding on the contents. What a complete blessing, as I thought about how many local people had all worked together to make this all possible.”

The Arrival of Christmas in Schools

As we move into December, many begin to focus their gaze on the miraculous virgin birth of Jesus. However, our Schools team started thinking about Christmas way back in October, when they planned a two part assembly following the journey of the Magi. Like many others, our team have also ‘gone digital’, so all assemblies have been pre-recorded and edited together well ahead of time.



The first part of the assembly follows the Magi as they prepare to set off to meet the new King. Our team also share about how we have expectations of what Christmas will be like and how we prepare for this time of year. The second part of the assembly focuses on the unexpected nature of the story. The Magi arrived in a big city expecting a king in a palace, however, they had to read scripture and look more deeply at the clues to discover who Jesus really was.

We are praying that the New Year will provide more opportunities for us to serve schools. We now share our messages with every school in our city. Please continue to pray pupils and staff see our videos and want to create a deeper relationship with our team. Schools are being contacted to find out if they would like prayer for anything and are being baked and delivered cakes to show them that they are loved. Last week, in response to an email sent to a school, our team had the opportunity to talk to a headteacher, pray with them, and offer support. This person is the only Christian in the school and was feeling burdened by the responsibility. Praise God that sending an email had this response! If you would like to sign up to receive regular emails to pray for schools, please follow this link: <http://eepurl.com/gxObGn>.

Our Rest Homes team continue to provide services and other digital content for care homes across our city.

If you would like to watch what they, and our Schools team, have created so far, please follow this link to our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgcJtYH8KIVE4T1Fvl-nuA>

We hope that as you prepare for Christmas that you remember the love that Jesus has for each person in our city. Please pray that this season and the new year will bring more opportunities for us to serve those Brighton and Hove in fresh ways.

Every blessing,

Brighton and Hove City Mission team



BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY MISSION



BRIGHTONCM

WWW.BHCM.ORG.UK