

2019/2020

# TELFORD CHRISTIANS TOGETHER

*Annual Report*



## FIVEFOLD MINISTRY ACROSS TELFORD

*Celebrating Good News stories from across our town as the Church responds to Covid and other significant issues.*



# Welcome

## FIVEFOLD MINISTRIES ACROSS TELFORD

Welcome to the TCT Annual report for 2019/20.

This year we focus on the way in which the Fivefold gifting's of Ephesians Chapter 4 are expressed through the Church in Telford.

In Ephesians 4 the Apostle Paul makes it plain that these Ascension gifts of Jesus have been given to the Church to enable us to BE the Body of Christ. In the New Testament accounts Jesus is plainly Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd and Teacher. Clearly, if we are to BE Jesus to Telford then all five need to be in evidence.

The structure of Ephesians 4 is instructive: v1-6 outlines the necessity for unity, v7-12 emphasise the diversity brought about by the fivefold, and v13-16 the maturity and fullness expressed in the Church when this diversity operates out of unity.

I've found it helpful to think of the function of each of these grace gifts as they operate within the church:

The **Apostolic** maintains the sent-ness of the church, reminding us that we are sent as God's people to make disciples of all nations and are part of a movement not a settled institution.

The **Prophetic** seeks to maintain the loving covenant relationship between God and His people, and longs for justice in all the earth.

The **Evangelistic** encourages and cultivates our sharing of the Good News of the Kingdom of God in word and action.

The **Shepherd** cultivates community, brings healing, looks out for the lonely and brings emotional intelligence to the Body of Christ

The **Teacher** fosters learning, is passionate about the Scriptures and helps us engage with God's wisdom for living well.

When all five function well together the Apostle Paul concludes in Ephesians 4v16 "As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love".

There are many different expressions of this happening across our town and we've selected five different stories to encourage you.



*"As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love".*

# Apostolic: South Telford

## TELFORD STREET PASTORS



Our ministry continued throughout 2019 and into 2020 with weekly patrols on Saturday evenings in Telford town centre, in Newport and in Wellington. Commencing at 10.00.p.m. and not normally completing their patrols until after 4.00.a.m. trained Christian volunteers from different churches were there when they were least expected; to 'listen, care for and help' anyone who needed their support. Ready with practical support from flip flops to space blankets, bottled water and first aid, but also to provide a non-judgemental listening ear to people in distress.

The start of 2020 was deeply overshadowed by the serious illness and then the untimely loss of Linda Mathieson in February. Linda, an Elder of the Telford Elim Pentecostal Church had been a Street Pastor since 2011 training with the first cohort and bringing all the expertise of years of youth work and outreach to the newly formed group. She became a Deputy Coordinator / Team Leader and was superb in this ministry. She became well known to dozens of young people in the weekend night time economy of Telford who knew her by name and sought her out when she was on patrol. She is greatly missed both as a Street Pastor and as a trustee of the Telford Street Pastors Charity.



With COVID-19 lockdown Street Pastors patrols were suspended until the beginning of July when early Saturday evening patrols were undertaken but finished around midnight as all night clubs were closed. It was clear that they had been greatly missed with many people thanking them for being out and about again. Sadly patrols were again suspended at the end of September when new rules led to the closure of licensed premises at 10.00.p.m. The Street Pastors remain in close contact with each other and look forward with enthusiasm to the time when they are once again able to pick up their ministry and get out onto the streets of Telford once more.

Rev Keith Osmund-Smith. Co-Ordinating Chaplain TCT and Minister Madeley Baptist Church

# Prophetic: North West Telford

## RACISM AND THE CHURCH



From June 2020 to the present, two black African/Caribbean couples from HOP have met regularly with the two white couples who are the leaders of HOP to review racial issues within church. Discussions have taken place over meals, in an atmosphere of love, trust and openness, to raise awareness and initiate transformation. The Holy Spirit has consistently inspired the next steps to be taken.

Discussions have included 'systemic and structural racism' particularly the need for a declared position from the leadership regarding racial injustice, insufficient representation of diversity on HOP website and social media, multicultural expressions of worship that embrace the diversity of the body. The conversations have also included racial insensitivity, lack of awareness, patronizing attitudes, language used and the need for meaningful mutual relationships across races.

These conversations around diversity will continue and develop. As a result, the leaders wrote a letter to the church with a Statement on Racism and altered the statement on the church web site to openly state their views against Racism. There is also a commitment to update the website to reflect effectively our diverse congregation. Out of these discussions have come the "Unity in Diversity" videos on our Facebook, with diverse individuals' 'bite-sized' stories and biblically based perspectives on race. The six videos published so far have had over 1,700 views to date.

*"The Holy Spirit  
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What is taking place is leading to a deeper appreciation of what Jesus' words "love one another as I have loved you" really mean and it is a path we want to walk together.

Tony & Mary Herber-Davies House of Prayer

# Evangelistic: Newport



## RENEW WELLBEING: GOOD NEWS ON THE HIGH STREET

'Quiet shared spaces where it's OK to not be OK' is the essence of Renew Wellbeing, an organisation set up to help churches provide a safe place for people to meet up and help improve their mental and emotional wellbeing.

The mental health of people of all ages has been highlighted nationally as a major concern. Many people may be really struggling but would probably not think of turning to the Church to find help.

The plan is for Churches Together in Newport to set up Renew Wellbeing from within a building in the heart of Newport. The aim is to provide a place where anyone can come in and feel relaxed, joining in activities if they would like to, whilst there are also prayer rhythms within a prayer space taking place. People would be free to join in with these prayers or not as they wish. We will be coming alongside people, offering support, a listening ear, and being there for them, whilst also letting them know of professional people who may be able to help if it's needed. We want people to be in a caring place where it's OK to not be OK, find help, and also hopefully feel the presence of God.

*Quiet shared  
spaces where it's  
OK to not be OK*

We have completed the 5 on-line sessions with Renew Wellbeing personnel, and are now planning how to proceed, including finding local contacts we can work with for professional help when needed, and other charities, local council staff etc. who share the aim of providing help with people's mental health in the area. We plan to start small, probably half a day a week, inviting various known contacts from across the town and see how things develop. We are praying about when to start as we want people to feel relaxed enough to come along, and not to add to any existing anxiety.

Dave Clissold Newport Christian Fellowship

# Shepherd:

# North East Telford



## A PARTNERSHIP OF HOPE

In 2018 we were approached by Neighbourly a charitable organisation who match supermarkets with charities in order to prevent good food going into landfill, enabling it instead to go to those who need it most, but perhaps cannot afford all that they need. A partnership was forged between Holy Trinity Wrockwardine Wood and Aldi Newport which has seen us able to feed thousands of people over the 2 years. Some are families with small children who find school holidays a challenge, some are elderly who had to previously choose between heating and eating, some are working families who just can't quite make ends meet – all are God's beloved children.

Since the outbreak of Covid-19 we have seen a marked increase in those seeking our service with queues forming down the Church Path at 8:45am for when we open at 9:30am. The stories we hear of job losses, pay cuts, zero hours contracts are heart breaking and there is so much sadness and anxiety within the community in which we serve. Into this we don't just bring food, we bring also words of hope and offers of prayer. We bring hearts of love and see moments of joy. We are here to share the good times and the bad times and let people know that God is with them through it all. Together we are called to serve and seek for the children of God who need him most, partnered with Aldi we are thankful that we can do this in a practical way here in 21st century Britain.

Rev Debbie Loughran, Vicar for the East Telford Benefice, Rural Dean for Telford Deanery

*"We don't just bring food, we bring also words of hope and offers of prayer"*

It is worth noting that this is but one example of many local initiatives through which local churches are meeting food poverty needs in our Borough.

# Teaching: Central Telford

## WHEN THE STORM HIT



We could see it coming, and yet the suddenness and severity of the lockdown was a shock to the whole nation- central Telford included. A few months earlier Dawley Baptist had upgraded its broadband and was used to broadcasting its services through Facebook Live. On 22nd March the Baptist, Anglican and Methodist leaders met and from there we broadcast a service together. Even then we had no idea that this would be the last time we could use a church building for four months.

The learning curve was very steep, yet, what seemed like chaotic working out of a new way of sharing worship and teaching quickly became a space in which the gifts and creativity of the churches found new directions and purposes. The relationships forged over several years of the CTEP leaders regularly meeting and praying together suddenly came into their own as we found ourselves having to put faith in each other's gifting's to be able to produce a service that would unify and encourage the Church in these exceptional times.

We knew that this was going to be a season of massive change within the central Telford Parish even before the COVID element was added to it. What this season has proved to us all is that God has placed the gifts and skills required for any given season within his Church. Any one of our particular fellowships would have struggled considerably more if the partnership had not been so strong. Together the sharing of the load has also enabled us to focus resources into supporting the Food Bank and the more vulnerable in our communities. It is true that none of us welcomes times of adversity but it is through such times we can learn and grow. Unity is the gift we have found and will continue to treasure.

Rev Ian Olliver Dawley Baptist Church

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# Telford Christians Together



COMING IN 2021

## NEXT CONFERENCE

What's next for the Church in Telford in a post-Covid world? Join Church leaders from across Telford as we explore together how the five graces gifted to the Church by Jesus are intended to bring maturity and fullness to His Body.

There is no silver bullet to the challenges we face, but we believe a working understanding of these ancient truths will significantly help us rediscover what it is to be the missional movement our Borough so desperately needs.

**Saturday February 6th 2021. 10am - 1pm**

#doyouknowHim?

10 weeks of discipleship and mission across the Churches of Telford

**Sunday April 18th to Sunday June 20th 2021**

Please keep in touch via:

Facebook

[www.telfordchristianstogether.co.uk](http://www.telfordchristianstogether.co.uk)

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*TCT works with  
today's church to  
build the church  
and community of  
tomorrow*