



August 2020

Dear friends

In the last six months many of us have experienced challenge and opportunities as we have adapted our lives in response to the Covid 19 Pandemic. That's been the case for us here at the Hackney COM. Much of the face to face ministry ceased almost overnight with the necessary lockdown and safe distancing measures. I'd like to share with you some of the ways in which we have continued expressing the love of God here. Some of these were shared by Andrena (the Pioneer Evangelist) and myself during Church Army's 'Cuppa with a Keyworker' live video chat in July (this can be viewed at www.churcharmy.org.uk).



Local Mutual Aid Groups popped up all over the UK. I volunteer with our local group at Clapton Park. This has involved visiting door to door checking that residents are safe and taking any requests for help, shopping, running errands etc. We were able to get an NHS workers bike repaired, donated PPE to our local hospital, and one resident who was so poorly required immediate medical attention. Food collection and distribution has played a key role, and we are working with other agencies to look at setting up a project to help address food poverty long term.



Working Virtually. I'd never heard of Zoom before lock down. But it has literally been a 'God send'. St. Barnabas Parish, which hosts the COM, and to which I contribute in ministry has embraced the challenge of pre-recorded services, prayer meetings, bible studies, staff meeting etc via Zoom. Many other organisations have done similar, and this has really helped us to connect with others addressing community issues. Partnership and working collaboratively is the way forward. The COM also has a started a Facebook page www.facebook.com/HackneyCoM



Barney's café had to close in March, but it reopened last week. It's open every Wednesday 2-3.30pm. The room layout, the type of activities and how we serve food and drinks has had to change to keep everyone safe. It was great to see some familiar and new faces, and I believe in these times when people are facing isolation and loneliness, Barney's has an important role to play.

Hackney Can Sing Community Choir. The choir also had to stop in March, and we are still unable to meet physically and sing. However, the choir now meets virtually on Wednesday evenings for 90 minutes. It does feel at bit weird singing to your laptop, but to see lots of familiar faces and chat, and then sing together is holding the community choir together until we are able to meet and sing together in the same room.



Speaking engagements. Before Lock down I had been regularly invited by churches to speak about the work of Church Army and the Hackney COM. Now that church services have resumed, I am able to resume this ministry, please get in touch if you would like me to visit your church.



Collette Dorgu an Evangelist in Training (EIT) with Church Army lives and ministers in Leyton and we have shared in ministry for almost two years. She came up with the idea to offer residents the opportunity to chat about their concerns and needs and offer prayer ministry. 'Citizens Space' meeting in Jubilee Park Leyton starts in September.

Pioneer School. Last year Dawn and I attend the National Church Planting Conference hosted by CCX (Centre for Church Multiplication). We have kept in contact with the organisers and this September I will be a delegate at the Pioneer school, a year of learning, sharing good practice and networking with those pioneering new Christian community in the Diocese of London. Initially much of this will be done virtually.



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Church Army was founded in 1882 by Wilson Carlile. The week of 18th - 27th September is founders week and many people in the Church Army Missional Community are taking up the **1882 Challenge**. Hackney COM has partnered up with the Medway COM lead by Stephen Ramshaw to host an event. The day will begin at 9am with a sponsored **18**km run, with runners linked at the wrist. I'm running and if you'd like to sponsor me please visit <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Stephen-Plumb1882>. At 12 noon there will be a brief service in St. Barnabas Church, Homerton E9 6DL, which will include **8** minutes of quiet prayer for Church Army ministry, and **2** evangelists sharing about their work. You are invited to join us on the day, and bring a picnic to enjoy lunch in the church grounds (socially distanced of course).

Thanks for your interest, support and prayers.

Stephen.

Prayers

Could I ask that you particularly pray for the following please?

- Establishing a project to help address food poverty
- Barneys Café
- Citizens Space
- Pioneer School
- Gathering a missional community.

Financial Support

Thank you

Thank you, for the support you give in every way. If you would like to financially support the work I am involved in please complete and return the form below or visit churcharmy.org/donate

Or if you prefer, you can set up a Standing Order directly using the details below:

Acc. 80255491 Sort Code. 20-49-81 **Reference No. 1176 / 1990SPL** Please use this reference number so that your contribution is directed to the Hackney Centre of Mission

We don't take your support for granted, so thank you so much for standing with us. I want to pray for you so please let ME know how I can.

Thank you!

Stephen Plumb



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*delete as appropriate

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