

CATALYST

Church Army's Magazine

September | 2021

ISSUE #14

ADMITTING & COMMISSIONING

Hear from three newly commissioned evangelists about their training and future plans.

THE MARYLEBONE PROJECT

Read about the launch of the Marylebone Project's new day centre and what this means for homelessness in London.

CHOSEN & CALLED

Leadership Development Officer, Jayne Elliott unpacks John 15:16 as she reflects on what it means to be called by God.

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EVANGELISM

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WELCOME TO CATALYST

It is now just over a month ago that the UK Government lifted all remaining restrictions in England. For some, the idea of Freedom Day was just that – a chance to regain the freedom that was lost for nearly two years through coronavirus. For others, the restrictions helped them feel safe, and the lifting of them brought with it feelings of anxiety and maybe even a sense of lostness.

Whether Freedom Day was a good day or a bad day for you, it was a new day and the start of a new season, and with that comes a sense of adjustment.

As Church Army, we have always aimed to respond to needs in all shapes and sizes, to adapt the way we work to all seasons and circumstances, and to stand alongside the marginalised in society, bringing hope to places where hope seems impossible. And this has continued to be a very busy season for us.

Alongside the challenges, we have also enjoyed times of celebration as we saw seven of our Evangelists in Training Admitted into the Office of Evangelist in the Anglican Church and Commissioned as Church Army Evangelists. You'll get to meet some of them in this issue of Catalyst and find out more about their heart for seeing people find hope and faith in Jesus.

Thank you to everyone who filled out our survey. We are using the answers to make new plans for Catalyst and Prayer Diary so we can keep you as close to the action as possible, wherever you are, as well as giving you the best opportunity to pray for us.

Thank you for your support.



Chris Hardy
Publications Officer

P.S. If you haven't had the opportunity to fill out the survey yet, it's not too late. Just open your internet browser and type www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CACAT2021

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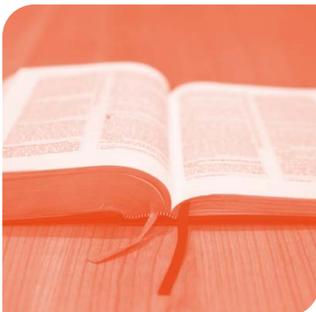
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Jayne Elliott unpacks John 15:16 for us in light of two big dates in our calendar.

FLIP UPSIDE DOWN FOR THE PRAYER DIARY



WHAT'S NEW?

THIS IS WHAT WE HAVE BEEN UP TO...

NEW APPOINTMENTS TO OUR FRONTLINE WORK

We are delighted to announce that [Megan Borges](#) has been appointed as the Pioneer Evangelist for Llandaff Centre of Mission and [Stephen Ramshaw](#) as Lead Evangelist for Sheffield City Centre of Mission.

CUPPA WITH A KEY WORKER - 8 SEPTEMBER

Grab a cuppa and join us online at 7pm on 8 September for Cuppa With a Key Worker. This month we'll be hearing from Aderemi Amusa and Ruhamah Sonson from the Marylebone Project to talk about the vision behind the work they do and the impact it is having on the lives of homeless women in Central London. They will also be giving us a virtual tour of The Sanctuary - Marylebone's newly refurbished day centre.

ADMITTING & COMMISSIONING

Congratulations to [Jane Duckitt](#), [Amy Hayes](#), [Jo Leslie](#), [Paul Ogunyemi](#), [Jenny Falcón Otero](#), [Vee Pinto](#), and [Maria Seaman](#) who were Admitted (to the Office of Evangelist) and Commissioned as Church Army Evangelists on 20 July. You can hear from one or two of them on page 6 of this issue of Catalyst.

[Marian Edwards](#) and [Matt Gould](#) were not able to travel over from Ireland so will be Commissioned at a later date.

1882 CHALLENGE

Whether you're 18 or 82 there's a place for you on our team this September! Whether on your own or with friends, set yourself a challenge around the numbers 18 or 82 and help us transform lives in communities across the UK and Ireland. To support us or to take part, visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/1882Challenge2021

CONNECT WITH US

You can find out what we are up to in real time by following any of our social media channels.



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GOD'S MISSION DURING CRISIS

Undertaking mission and evangelism during an international pandemic has been an incredible challenge, throwing into question many things we had previously taken for granted. Covid-19 has dramatically changed the way we reach out to people to meet practical, spiritual and emotional needs.

The Research Team has been working hard to find out just how we have adapted to impact people's lives during the pandemic.

During the lockdowns...

23,800 **23,800** 23,800

Our centres of mission provided more than 23,800 food parcels to at least 3,100 families/households.

3,000 **3,000** 3,000

12 of our centres of mission provided around 3,000 activity packs or gift bags for children, young people, and families.

1,500 **1,500** 1,500

1,500 vulnerable individuals and families received other essentials such as clothing, furniture and baby equipment.

19,700 **19,700** 19,700

Eight of our centres of mission posted devotional thoughts and reflections online and on social media, with an estimated 19,700 views.

**THIS WORK IS ONLY MADE POSSIBLE
BY YOUR FAITHFUL SUPPORT**



ADMITTING & COMMISSIONING

On 20 July we hosted the Admitting and Commissioning of seven evangelists in the chapel of the Wilson Carlile Centre in Sheffield. And although there were less people present this year, including two of the evangelists who live in Ireland, many joined online to witness, pray for, and celebrate our new evangelists on the day they were Admitted into the Office of Evangelist within the Anglican Church and Commissioned as Church Army Evangelists.

We caught up with newly commissioned **Vee**, **Jenny** and **Maria** to find out more about their training, their passion for telling people about Jesus and what they plan to do next...

VEE PINTO

I am currently based in the city of Leicester – a beautiful, diverse place and I truly feel at home here.

I've done some pioneering work amongst young families and I am currently an intercultural pioneer minister as part of the Intercultural Worship Communities project, funded partly by the Church of England's Strategic Development Funding, leading the creation and establishment of a new thriving Fresh Expression of church in Leicester City Centre with another lay minister and establishing and providing leadership to an intercultural and intergenerational core leadership team. My ministry is all about leading a group of people from diverse cultural, ethnic and age groups exploring faith in Jesus. I am also currently a member of the Archbishop's College of Evangelists which is enabling me to enable others to share their faith in Jesus in everyday ways.

There are lots of exciting things about sharing Jesus with people but primarily it's the joy of people coming to know Jesus deeply and coming to know and live out their calling in God and being transformed daily by Jesus'

grace and love. Whenever I share my faith in everyday creative ways it is such a joy to see Jesus actively changing people's lives.

I joined Church Army training with not a lot of confidence in my identity as a child of God or as an evangelist. Through training I've grown in learning ways of discerning God's voice as I engage in mission and ministry.

My next step is to continue sharing the Gospel of Christ Jesus with everyone and everywhere through word and deed and enabling people for evangelism! EXCITING!!!

JENNY FALCÓN-OTERO

I live and am based in Bristol/Bath area. My ministry is mainly working with people with learning disabilities, helping to provide them with accessible church teaching in a dedicated small group and aiming to integrate them more into the wider church. I have also been part of the spiritual care team at the Royal United Hospital in Bath for the last couple of years. My husband and I are also foster carers which we see as our joint ministry.

I love seeing people come to faith and relationship with Jesus because there really is

nothing more beautiful than gaining another brother or sister in the Kingdom! I also love the pure and precious way that some people with learning disabilities worship without any barriers or self-consciousness.

During my time training I have grown closer to God and increased my desire to know Him more. God has shown me the people He wants me to minister to and given me the energy and heart to do so. I have fibromyalgia so I am always short of energy but I find I always have energy for the things God has called me to.

Being commissioned means I have the authority to go out and tell even more people about Jesus. I'm so excited to see what doors this opens for me and how I can continue my ministry in a more formal way. I am still working out where God is leading me next but for now I will continue volunteering at the hospital and have just been offered a part time chaplain job in Bristol. I'm looking forward to seeing where God leads me though, what an adventure!

MARIA SEAMAN

I live in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. My main ministry for the last few years has been with the homeless and a couple of years ago, after a break from it, I came back to children's ministry and have become the

children's ministry coordinator for my church with a specific role for reaching those outside the church.

During my time training, God has used every single person I have met at Church Army to teach me so much. They have helped me to get a greater understanding of the Word of God, they have challenged me on things and they have helped me to get a deeper understanding of our Father. I now feel more ready to answer difficult questions when they arise.

For me commissioning is two things: affirmation and beginning. From the start of my discernment process, I always looked to follow God's will for me, to make sure this really was what God was calling me to. This has continued through my training and even when encouraged by tutors and others, looking at the incredibly gifted people I was surrounded by, I always felt a bit inadequate. So for me, it feels like God is saying 'you don't need to doubt anymore, I have called you to this.' And at the same time, it is about a beginning, looking for what God asks of me and following His will to serve Him wherever He calls me. And I just cannot wait to see what God has for me!



Your gift helps us to train future evangelists.
Please visit www.churcharmy.org/giving

FINDING SANCTUARY AT MARYLEBONE

The day centre is very much at the heart of how the Marylebone Project serves homeless women in London, however during the lockdowns of 2020/21 Marylebone's day centre had to close its doors, with many of the women being set-up in other hostels in Central London. The pandemic has been particularly difficult for the women staying at Marylebone, but while some of the normal activities were put on hold there have also been some exciting changes, and now we are delighted to announce that as part of the Evening Standard's campaign to end homelessness in London, the day centre is getting ready to re-open as The Sanctuary, a 24-hour a day service.

We caught up with [Ruhamah Sonson](#), Marylebone's Centre Manager, to tell us about lockdown, life at Marylebone and what changes are taking place...

MARYLEBONE IN LOCKDOWN

With the announcement of the national lockdown in March 2020 we were faced with the difficult decision to close our day centre and put our Meaningful Activity Programme on hold. All staff members were deployed to work within our Support Services team. This enabled staff to split their hours working from home which minimised their exposure to risk and gave staff from other teams the unexpected opportunity to work with the residents in a way that had not been possible before, allowing stronger relationships to be built with our women.

Social isolation and the lockdown affected the mental health and emotional wellbeing of many of our women, but their resilience and tenacity has been incredible. With 60% of our women being made redundant due to the pandemic, we revamped our Women into Work sessions to include self-esteem and confidence-building sessions. So far two women have successfully found employment over the last four weeks and we have seven other women lined up with job interviews.

EVENING STANDARD

The Evening Standard Campaign raised funds that will enable our Centre to become the first 24/7 service to serve as a safe haven for homeless women in Central London. Often homeless women are extremely vulnerable, they can face horrendous treatment including sexual abuse and violence. Many of our women have reported feeling unsafe when accessing largely male homelessness services. Our 24-hour sanctuary will mean that women will have a safe place to go through the night.



THE REFURBISHMENT

Earlier this year the day centre underwent a major refurbishment. Some of the changes include a brand new fully furnished kitchen for the women to be able to make their own food, drinks, and snacks. The ceilings have been raised in places to give a more spacious feel and a beautiful wooden reception desk has been built so that now as women walk through the door they are directly greeted with a warm and smiling reception.

Previously, the IT rooms were cramped due to a lack of desk space, however, we now have built-in desks, installed around the perimeter of the room, providing a stylish and more spacious feel to the space. There has been an impressive makeover of the shower rooms, they now have a contemporary and luxurious feel with underfloor heating.

"The Centre is like a little village; I can get help with everything I need here. I especially enjoy having the body alignment massages"

CENTRE SERVICE USER

The Centre Team worked hard to add finishing touches to the space with soft furnishings and pictures. A recent partnership was forged with Selfridges and their Merchandising Team further improved our rooms by adding plants and brand-new furnishings.

The service users were directly involved in the design and were invited to meet with the architect to pick out colour schemes, prints and tiling. It was a very proud moment for the women to see their ideas and suggestions manifested in the final design.



One service user commented:

“The service has been completely transformed; it looks like a totally different place. The food that is served at other centres is full of oil; they usually prepare chips and pizza but when I come to the Marylebone project and eat the food, I feel the difference in my body because the food is healthy”

Now the refurbishment is complete, we are gearing up to become a 24-hour service by 6 September 2021. The opening times are currently 09:30 – 20:30 Monday - Sunday. The Centre Team are planning to significantly increase the provision of activities at the centre during the evenings, offering a wider range of sessions and access to support services such as the Nurse Clinic and talking therapies.

We are really excited about being able to provide women with a safe space to spend the night, with Centre Advice workers on hand to provide advice, guidance, and general support.

Our 24-hour service will help to combat the issue of women’s homelessness. Hard to reach women will be able to access a therapeutic and safe environment which will provide a range of practical support such as Domestic Violence Advocates, Substance Misuse Specialists and health screenings.



Ruhamah lives in Croydon and works as the Centre Manager for the Marylebone Project. She loves being a part of a service that affects change in the lives of women and in her spare time she likes spending quality time with her seven nieces and nephews.

HELP US? WILL YOU HELP US? WILL YOU HELP US? WILL YOU HELP US?

We still need to raise an additional half a million pounds for the Marylebone Project in order to sustain The Sanctuary day centre. Your gift could make all the difference. Please visit www.churcharmy.org/giving and please quote the Marylebone Project when you make your donation.

CHOSEN AND CALLED

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to bear fruit, fruit that will last"

(JOHN 15:16 ESV ANGLICIZED VERSION)

There were two long anticipated dates in July coincidentally only 24 hours apart. Monday 19 July when the most prohibitive restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic were lifted and Tuesday 20 July which was the Admitting & Commissioning of seven of our evangelists-in-training in the chapel at the Wilson Carlile Centre. Both were significant milestones and causes for celebration; the 19 July represented reaching another stage in a journey back to some kind of normality, and the 20 July marked the end of one phase of learning, and being sent back out into their mission context to continue to grow, flourish and bear fruit.

John 15 verse 16 is significant for me because it was the verse given to me as a 16 year-old, at my baptism. As a young Christian, growing up in a pastor's family I hoped this meant something exciting, preferably abroad, and imagined myself as a cross between Jackie Pullinger and Amy Carmichael! Instead, after finishing my degree and completing a gap year, I found myself employed as a residential social worker in an adolescent assessment centre and living in Barnsley. Not exactly the glamorous fruitful life I'd envisaged being called to as a teenager.

As I look back over the nearly 40 years since my baptism, it has been that sense of being chosen and called by God to bear fruit for His kingdom that has characterised my choices and decisions along the way, including the

recent one to uproot my husband and I and return to Sheffield after ten years in the East Midlands to join Church Army as their Leadership Development Officer back in January 2020.

Some things I've learned about fruitfulness amidst the challenges of ministering to some very disadvantaged and marginalised communities, is that fruit can be found in some unexpected places and people, including the ex-young offender from the adolescent assessment centre, that I used to take along to the local YMCA youth club, and found faith through the prison chaplaincy service (as I discovered years later). All it needs is for us to be obedient in responding to that initial call, keep offering ourselves to God and to trust him to bring forth the fruit of our service.

I hope like me you are encouraged by the stories of our evangelists around the UK and Ireland; the transformation they've seen in individuals' lives and the hope they have brought to their local communities throughout the pandemic. Please also join us in praying for our newly commissioned evangelists as they seek to bear fruit in this next season.



God bless,
Jayne Elliott

YOUR GIFT MATTERS

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- Romans 15:13

One of the lessons the Covid pandemic has taught us is to learn to live with uncertainty. So many things, which we thought we could always rely upon were withdrawn, removed or disturbed. Going to church for example and singing praises to our God – who would ever have thought we would be denied this? At times we've not even had the certainty of going to the shops and finding basic living essentials!

Our world has been shaken, yet despite all of the grief, pain and uncertainty, of which we are not immune, as followers of Christ we have hope; we have the Good News of the Gospel and the Bible tells us that this hope does not disappoint (Romans 5).

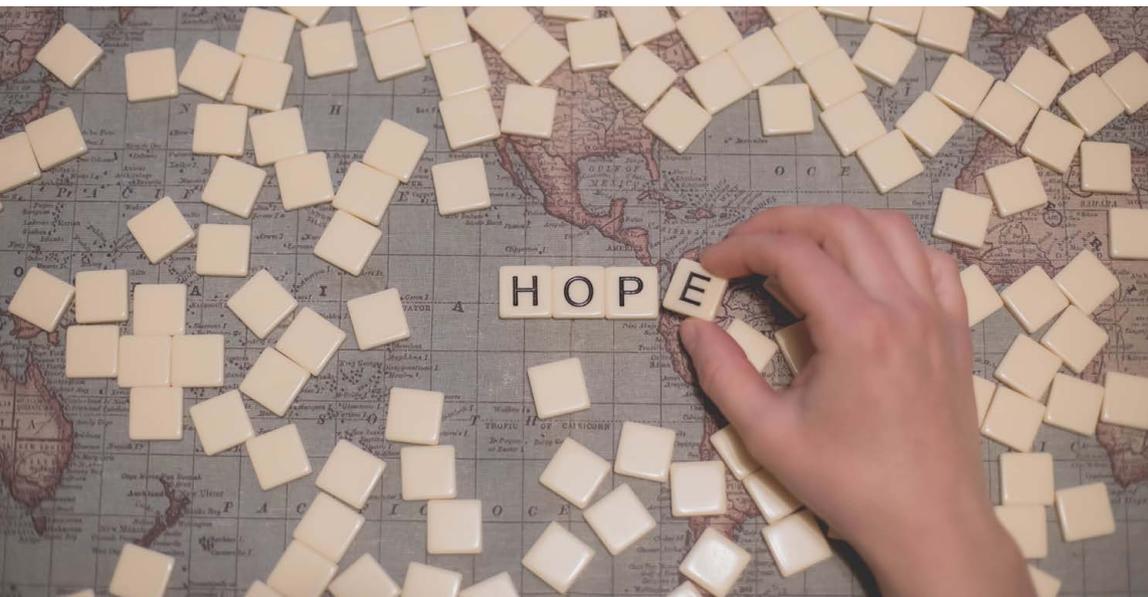
That's why I love that Church Army has commissioned more evangelists to take the

story of grace, redemption and hope, found in Jesus, to communities across the UK and Ireland. It's why I love that we are able to open the Marylebone Project day centre 24/7 to welcome more women affected by homelessness and be a place of safety, refuge and hope for them.

Your gifts enable hope and we have so many more people to reach, so if you can would you please consider making an extra gift today? As we learn to live with uncertainty may we choose to live with hope in abundance.



Paul Critchlow
Fundraising Team Leader



WAYS TO GIVE

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ETERNAL LEGACIES:

One in four of our frontline projects are funded by gifts left to us in a Will.

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Church Army,
Wilson Carlile Centre,
50 Cavendish Street,
Sheffield, S3 7RZ

Editor: Chris Hardy
Designer: Josh Boot



Tel: 0300 123 2113 • Web: www.churcharmy.org • Email: hello@churcharmy.org

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To order more copies of Prayer Diary for your friends, church or group, please telephone **0300 123 2113** or email comms@churcharmy.org

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