

LIGHT 2020

This was planned for months... and then the Covid lockdown began.

However, TFM felt that to let it go would not be right – and 6 intrepid mission centres, representing 14 churches agreed. The first ever Virtual Mission was born.

We asked a graphic designer to draw up some posters which could be used on church noticeboards and church members windows. We also had printed two postcards – one with ‘peace’ on it, one with ‘love’; a version of our door-to-door survey all of which could also be posted through doors.



We built up teams – most of about 6 people – with a team leader. These teams stayed at home and met using Zoom... Some ambitious programmes were put in place, with coffee mornings, midday prayers, healing services, all on Zoom! One team was even asked to send recorded assemblies into the local school. And our old friend David Kelly provided two Facebook concerts – one on the testimony and music of Johnny Cash, interwoven with David’s testimony and one on the music and testimony of U2.

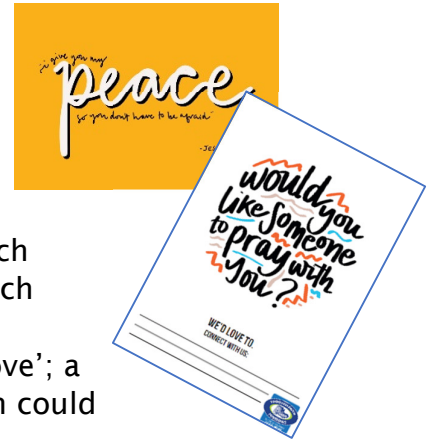
Some teams found that, as Government advice altered, so churches were looking for a ‘physical’ presence and in the end 4 teams had a pair of people on the ground for some of the days. These were mainly used running a ‘distanced’ prayer station, or prayer walking, or distribution of cards to local houses.

We began and ended with a mainly recorded service of Commissioning and Celebration on Facebook – and were delighted to have Archdeacon Hugh on board for those.

So, ‘How did it go?’

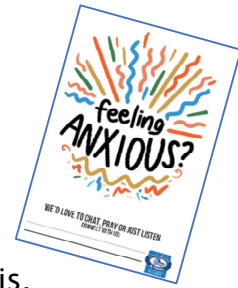
Extremely well, given that what we were doing was so new, and the technology was way beyond the comfort zone of most people taking part...

We didn’t see a great number of people coming into the meetings and were surprised by the lack of contact from the posters and cards. However, every team reported really good engagement with the church members. We had



excellent reports from healing services and a particularly good time of ministry within the actual teams.

It did seem that response to the posters and cards was all physical – actual people meeting and responding:- such as *‘A lady stopped at the junction – she was reading a poster – so I went over and asked ‘Are you anxious?’ ‘YES she replied’ ‘Would you like us to pray for you?’ ‘YES’*



Anyway, TFM are continuing to think and pray through all this. It's all very new, but in here are some lessons we must learn for the future. In here too, is once again the glorious news that God works through every situation, every time, every technology – and we give thanks and praise that He used us in Light 2020.

Some further feedback:

‘Highlight of the Virtual Mission was getting to know the fellow mission volunteers in our group. I felt that we encouraged one another, united together and felt that at the end of the mission they had become my friends.’

‘We are able to share heartfelt faith stories and still engage with real people albeit on the screen. The posters and prayer cards helped and we know of at least one enquiry response through that.’

‘..that that was the happiest mission team I can remember being on’.

‘There were enough "God-incidences" to convince me that it was worthwhile.’

Thank you for such a unusual and learning experience.’