

Philly News

Hello! We hope you are having a great term. We want to share our latest news, encouragements and prayer points with you!

Coming up this Easter @ Philly

During Holy Week (25th March - 31st March)

- Short evening reflections, Monday - Thursday 7pm in the Conference Centre, Wednesday will be in Foodbank
- Prayer Stations that can be accessed at any time, by prior arrangement, as communities and families. They will also be open to everyone half an hour before and after the evening reflections.
- Good Friday All Age Service: 29th March 10.30am.

Easter Sunday: 31st March 10.30am. There is a joint service with Streetwise with lots of exciting plans so look out for posts and flyers to share with your family, friends and neighbours in March.

Let's pray together for Sheffield with Arise:March

1-31 March 2024

Since 2021, over 100 churches from across Sheffield have been arising together each March to prayer-walk every street in our city, using a special Arise prayer-walking app. Join the Arise community to receive your invitation to your link to the prayer-walking app, and additional tools to help you make the most of March.

Sign up now at www.AriseSheffield.org

Testimony

A testimony from Zak who ran an Alpha course over the Autumn term in the foodbank café space.

"We ran 10 Wednesday evening sessions and a Saturday where we focussed on the Holy Spirit. At our busiest evening we had 33 people including team!

We had a variety of people from foodbank, Streetwise, and friends of people at Philly. All from different kinds of backgrounds: Christians, non-Christians, agnostics, catholics, pagans and more! (This made for some very interesting discussions!)

Eating together was such an important part of the course for everyone, and especially for a number of attendees who don't always have access to regular hot meals. We were really grateful to a number of servant-hearted communities who helped to cook and serve food - thank you!

I was really encouraged to see people engaging with some of the biggest questions of life and faith. Towards the end of the course a number of people asked me for Bibles to read, and to join communities where they can grow deeper in their faith.

I am really grateful to the team of Alpha volunteers who made the whole thing possible. They were really faithful at turning up and really wise and gracious in the way they supported people in their small groups."

Youth

March 15-17th Youth Weekend Away

We are going to a new location in Buxton and we would love prayers for our young people to connect with God, be able to listen to the things He may be saying to them, & for them to have a fun weekend with friends

A final note from Mike

Hello all,

The start of 2024 has been very busy! It began with a review of our safeguarding practices which was helpful and will assist us as we continue to prioritise this important aspect of the life of our church. Thank you to all of you who helped and participated with the review; the feedback from the review team was very positive concerning your willingness to contribute and collaborate with them.

I am very grateful for the team we have at Philly and for the way that we work together and complement each other. Mid-January we all went away to Wensleydale to spend time worshipping, praying and.... having fun! We more recently went to Cambridge for a gathering of churches encouraging each other in their mission. We came away from that with a good sense of where God is leading us for the coming year and a prophetic word which encouraged us to have fun together as a team, which we decided to respond to straight away by heading into Cambridge to buy milkshakes (they featured in the word!)

Some headlines from this time together are that we are going to :

- Continue to press into prayer including creating the prayer room as a resource for communities to use
- Keep discipleship high on our agenda; especially supporting communities as key places where discipleship happens. Two of our present communities are very close to multiplying which means there will be more space for people not yet in a community to join one. The aim is for at least 90% of the church to be in a community by the end of the year.
- look to develop our work partnering with the Food & Community Trust and the work that Zak is doing at connect café. We are exploring opportunities to plant churches / gospel communities out of this work and are in discussion with the diocese about this.

I recently have been reminded about how Jesus prioritised solitude to calibrate the relationships he had in his life. He always prioritised time with the Father before anything else and this is what enabled him to give all he did to relationships with people. (Luke 5:15-16) In this season of lent as we approach Easter, I pray that we too will rediscover the gift of choosing to withdraw so we can spend time with God, so that we may be the best we can be in our human relationships.

God bless

Mike

