

Care Van News

Issue 18 - Autumn 2014

The Care Van is jointly managed by Bethany Christian Trust and Edinburgh City Mission

Salty Food

Cameron Black, Care Van Manager

Matthew 5:13: "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavour, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spells out how He wants us to live; He calls us to be salty. Jesus spent His time going to the outcast and marginalised. He healed lepers, ate with sinners and went out of his way time and again for the least, the last and the lost.

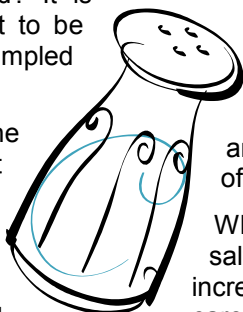
When Jesus came across a wee man who had climbed a tree to see Him walk past, He followed the Father's promptings, stopped, looked up and was salty; "Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay in your house today." The attention He gave to Zacchaeus shocked everyone, not least Zacchaeus! Whilst others grumbled that Jesus had chosen such a horrible man to stay with, something spectacular was happening in Zacchaeus' heart. As a tax collector he was more often treated badly than honoured or shown special attention. He immediately saw a new way of life opening up to him and announced something very out of character,

"Lord, see! Half of what I own I will give to poor people. And if I have taken money from anyone in a wrong way, I will pay him back four times as much!" Jesus then declared, "Today, a person has been saved in this house.

This man is a Jew also. For the Son of Man came to look for and to save from the punishment of sin those who are lost."

What an amazing moment. The saltiness that brought out this incredible flavour was Jesus showing care for, and dignity to, someone who felt at the bottom of the pile. His life was transformed.

Jesus is still doing the same today through the Care Van and we are privileged to be partnering with Him in this. On the Van we have opportunity to put this calling to be salty into practice. We are often serving the very least in our society, those whom others have rejected. It is a wonderful thing to be Jesus' arms and feet. It is great that we can give food and drink to sustain people and whilst doing this we can take opportunity to treat them like Jesus treated Zacchaeus; to speak with kindness, dignity and love. Fireworks will happen, new possibilities will open up and hope will dawn in their hearts. As we serve the food in God's strength, let's make sure that it is "salty" food.



Lunchtime Project Update

Ruth Longmuir, Project Coordinator

I'm very happy to be able to tell you that we have secured further funding for this project! It has become an important service in the city and is now guaranteed to operate until at least August 2015 which is fantastic.

A report of the first nine months of the Lunchtime Care Van is available on both the City Mission and Bethany's websites. The Steering Group is very pleased with the way the service has taken shape and we hope in the future to develop the service by operating on a fourth lunchtime every week. I'm most grateful to all the volunteers who have helped make this service what it is—particularly to those who have gone out on the van with very little notice and those who have

4,267 lunches provided
so far (Nov 13-Aug 14)

Read the full report here:

[www.bethanychristiantrust.com/
services/emergency-resettlement/](http://www.bethanychristiantrust.com/services/emergency-resettlement/)

Or contact us for a paper copy

faithfully collected the food despite the varying shop closing times. If you know of anyone who would like to volunteer we are still looking for more people, especially church teams, and those who are willing to drive the van.

Numbers using the service have continued to rise and we are currently seeing an average of 43 people at the van per lunchtime. Recent months have seen more people accessing the van at the Waverley Bridge stop but the busiest location is still the Leith Walk stop, just north of McDonald Road.

Thank You Ceilidh

Back in July Bethany held a Thank You Ceilidh in Lauriston Hall for all Care Van and Care Shelter volunteers. As well as thanking all our wonderful volunteers we also celebrated 50 years of Bethany hostels: 20 years of Bethany House and 30 years of Bethany Christian Centre. There was a great mix of volunteers, staff and residents at the ceilidh, as well as a very tasty buffet and some good dancing. We've had very positive feedback about the event and everyone seems to have had a really good evening. Hopefully we can do something similar next year.



My Experience Volunteering

Sarah Randell, Lunchtime Care Van Volunteer

Having been aware of Bethany's work through church links, I offered to volunteer on the Care Van on a regular basis because I wanted to serve people in genuine need, locally, in a very practical way. Since March, I've served food to homeless people every Wednesday lunchtime.

The experience has given me great perspective and it's been hugely rewarding too. For me, seeing people's desperate circumstances up close and personal, so to speak, made me take stock of what's important in life and think about where I get my value from. I believe that we should be a blessing to others and I'm very mindful of Micah 6:8 which asks what the Lord requires of us. The answer is to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly. So, for me, it's about faith in action.

Getting alongside and amongst homeless men and women – individuals that most folk chose to

ignore when they see them sitting on the pavement – has been a privilege. Each week, I look forward to seeing all the regular characters and worry about them if they're not there. Not all the people we serve are rough sleepers though. Some have overnight accommodation but no means of feeding themselves, so the Care Van is a lifeline.

There's a great camaraderie amongst the homeless community. People look out for each other and there's a lot of humour in spite of challenging circumstances. Corporate volunteers often ask if they'll be safe – which of course they are – and they remark afterwards that they never expected so much fun and banter!

On average, we serve around 45 people each day, handing out sandwiches, crisps, fruit and hot drinks kindly donated by local cafés. We often give out donated clothes too.

Sarah is moving on to full time employment and so we are looking for someone to take on her role. She leads a team every Wednesday which includes 2 different corporate volunteers who come along to help each week. If you would be interested in helping in this way please get in touch with Ruth

Cleaner Needed

We are looking for a willing volunteer to give the Care Van a really good clean once a quarter. All cleaning equipment is provided and the Van can be cleaned whenever suits you. If interested please speak to Cameron or Ruth (contact details on back page)

Care Van Parking Space

By Barbara Sangster, volunteer

As many of you will be aware by now, the Care Van is located in a different position in the car park at Jane Street. This has resulted in a great improvement as it is parked outside the kitchen where we can easily fill up the flasks. We then unplug the Van and off we go.



When we return the space has always been available, thus far, and we park the van without any hassle. The driver can plug in the charger while the others tidy up and leave the Van spick and span for the next team.

Dates For Your Diary



The next inductions for all new Care Van volunteers will be on:

Lunchtime volunteers: **Wednesday 19 November, 7pm**

Evening volunteers: **Wednesday 26 November, 7pm**

Both sessions will last about an hour and be held in South Leith Baptist Church, Casselbank Street EH6 5HA

Contact Details

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Ruth Longmuir, for Lunchtime Care Van & all volunteer paperwork (BCT)
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