

Events

Dates for your diary

Caring Christmas Trees

- Order your tree at www.caringchristmastrees.com or by calling 0845 111 8733
- Volunteer 4 hours of your time
- Tell your friends
- Order deadline: 13th December

Bethany 25th Anniversary Celebration Saturday 26th April - venue tbc

Email events@bethanyct.com or call 0131 625 5320 for more information.

At Bethany we are delighted to be able to keep admin costs at a minimum thanks to generous skills donations from designers, photographers and other professionals.

To make a furniture donation in Edinburgh please call (0131) 467 3993. For Fife collections please call 0845 062 2211. We would be delighted to accept all good quality donations, white goods and soft furnishings meeting 1988 fire regulations.



www.bethanychristiantrust.com

Bethany Christian Trust, Bethany Hall, 18 Jane Street, Edinburgh, EH6 5HD
Tel: 0131 467 3030, Fax: 0131 625 5300, Email: info@bethanyct.com
Registered Charity Number SC003783

News Update

10/07

Bethany
Christian
Trust

Reaching Out

A Day In the Life of a Care Shelter Worker

James' Story

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Reaching Out

Do you ever just need to see a friendly face, to be reassured that someone is there to talk your problems over with you? Does there ever come a time when you need advice and a helping hand to face some of life's many challenges?

It is this support which is missing from the lives of many of the homeless and vulnerable people in society. They do not have the comfort of that friendly face or the security of someone fighting their corner with them.

Bethany understands the need for personal contact and interaction between service users and service providers; the need to remind them not only of the services available to them, but also that someone cares. Bethany's street work provides a point of contact for some of society's most vulnerable and inaccessible people; those whom other service providers do not reach.

One such service user tells of the work of Bill McNicoll, Bethany's Drop-in Co-ordinator in Fife: "The doctor wanted to stop my methadone script 3 years ago but Bill came with me and talked to him. Without my methadone I probably would have gone back to heroin. Since then I've managed to put on a stone in weight and have got a two bedroom flat with my cousin, thanks to Bill's support."

Bill is a trusted and friendly face to many service users in Fife, and his approach is simple; to make himself visible and available

on the streets around Dunfermline and Leven on a daily basis, talking to between 5 and 20 people every day. From the first contact with a new service user he seeks to gain their trust. He achieves this by showing he cares through remembering their name, always being available for a chat and offering practical advice on homeless issues. Bethany's street work bridges the gap between service users and Bethany's other services, like the Toastie Club, and encourages a trusting and lasting relationship of care between the two parties.

Last year Bethany's Toastie Club in Dunfermline received over 4,000 visits from service users, the popularity of which led to the creation of further drop-in sessions in Leven. The success of these two provisions is largely a result of the street work done by Bill, who constantly reminds service users of the dates and times of both drop-ins and encourages them to attend.

Both the street work and the Drop-in sessions can be starting points for positive changes in the lives of those they reach. Even the most tentative hint at requests for addiction help will be followed up by staff. This continued support and interaction has encouraged 5 individuals to begin to tackle their substance dependencies in the last 2 months.

It's clear from service users' stories that Bethany's street work is invaluable in reaching out to Fife's homeless and vulnerable people. Bill is a friendly face that is missing from the lives of these service users and is someone they can depend on to support them when it seems no one else is on their side. As one service user put it "Bill spreads happiness, he is the least selfish guy I know."

Care Shelter Article

We are pleased to report that the Care Shelter opened its doors again at the end of October for its 12th consecutive season. We expect another busy period serving hot dinners, providing beds and shelter and offering practical advice and friendship to rough sleepers every night for 5 months.

James MacInnes, who worked at the first ever Bethany Shelter says the Shelter has gone from strength to strength over the years, growing from basic support, managed by just one staff member and a team of willing volunteers for a 2-week period over Christmas and New Year to something so much more substantial and all-embracing.

With years of experience and improvements along the way, today's service is something to be immensely proud of. The period of service provision has been extended to 22 weeks, the number of churches involved has increased dramatically. The bedding has improved, the staff and volunteer teams know exactly what to do and how to do it well, and every night the service runs like clockwork.

Yet despite the ongoing development of the service, the core aims have never wavered from day one. The demographic of our service users has altered and their issues have changed but the Shelter still helps between 23 and 28 people every night because the need for a Shelter still remains.

The Shelter offers immediate crisis intervention for people who have no-other option; who have no-one else who cares whether they live or die. For people who have hit rock bottom and need a place to go to stay alive on freezing winter nights, the Shelter offers comfort and the hope of a new day. Some 750 people each year benefit from the provision of the Shelter and experience God's love through the practical support of the Church in Edinburgh. The years have passed since the first Care Shelter opened, but the need is still there. Bethany knows that it is still vitally important for the Shelter to offer its life-saving support, so that when everything else looks bleak, people see a glimmer of hope and realise they still have a future.

Newsbytes

Bethany is delighted to have opened a new men's drop-in. This service is for isolated men, for example those living in hostel accommodation. It works with the men to build confidence, skills and new relationships in the community, combating one of the major causes of homelessness – loneliness and isolation.

Walk for Homelessness 07

Bethany's first Fife Walk for Homelessness was universally heralded a huge success. The sun shone for around 170 cheerful participants who turned out to show their support for homeless people, travelling from as far afield as Motherwell and Peebles just to be there with other like-minded people.

There was a huge spread of ages, one as young as 14 months, happily carried in the backpack by her parents, alongside others well into retirement age, yet still fighting fit and willing to put their best foot forward to help homeless people. There was a real family atmosphere as children walked side

by side with parents enjoying the break from the routine of daily life and making the most of the chance to spend quality time with their offspring. Friends also enjoyed the experience of time well spent catching up on all the recent news as they strode purposefully along. Even Tess the dog was being sponsored by Broxburn Baptist Church Sunday school to do the Walk to raise the much-needed funds to keep our services running. The walk route was beautiful and the specially donated shortbread from Shortbread House in Edinburgh, now a firm favourite with regulars, was delicious and very much appreciated.

We are thrilled that so many people came to our Fife Walk this year, and hope that thanks to our fantastic supporters and their sponsors the Walk will raise around £10,000 for Bethany's work. Thank you so much to everyone who walked and who sponsored a walker. We hope you will all come back again next year, with your friends!



A Day in the Life

Mike Sherlock

In this Edition of News Update we speak to Mike Sherlock, who worked as Team Leader at Bethany's Care Shelter in 2006 and is returning again this season.



Mike Sherlock

Could you tell us a little about the Care Shelter?

Everybody and anybody uses it, male and female, from 18 to 80. The homeless people who arrive at the Care Shelter could have come for the first time that night, or could have been homeless for a number of years. They could have been made homeless through violence, debt and home repossession, ex-service personnel, immigrants from Eastern Europe.

The Care Shelter provides a hot meal, and shelter and protection for the night. We also provide "an ear to hear", and give practical help and advice on finding a homeless hostel.

Could you talk us through a typical night in your life as worker at the Care Shelter?

We meet at the church hosting the Care Shelter at 8.30pm, and open the doors at 9.15pm. Although some people make their own way there, we also provide a minibus transport service, typically picking up about 30 people.

There are also a few people that the police bring in during the course of the night. Numbers attending the Care Shelter vary, from 7 to around 25 people.

After providing a hot meal, and getting the people settled for the night, we aim to have lights out at 11pm although there is still some coming and going after that. 4am-6am is the quietest time. We also provide a breakfast at 6.30am, and everybody leaves by about 7am.

What does Bethany give to the service users?

Safety, security, rest, advice, heat and light, food, respect, and above all, Christian love and support.

What is your favourite part of the job?

Talking to people, engaging with them and establishing trust. Many of the people who visit the Care Shelter have had difficulty in the past finding people in whom they can trust.

What is your least favourite part of the job?

Having to ask someone to leave the Care Shelter for a violation of the rules such as violence, drug use or attempted to deal drugs. It is not easy doing this, but the rules are there for everyone's good.

Why do you do this job?

I was homeless once myself. I have since become a Christian, and now I want to give something back. My job gives me a sense of worth, and helps others break the vicious circle of homelessness and unemployment.

What does Bethany mean to you?

We show Christian love in action, practise fairness and equality, and above all, practise what we preach! Bethany is also a great company to work for.

How can our readers help?

As well as praying for our work, you can get involved directly with the Care Shelter through your church, hand in warm clothes, and contribute either indirectly by buying a Caring Christmas tree or supporting other Bethany events, and directly by making a donation.

James's Story

On 2 December 2006, I said to myself, "I don't want this life anymore." I felt empty, something was missing. I had been drinking heavily my whole life. I had destroyed every relationship I had. I didn't want my life to continue this way. I prayed to God and said that I wanted him to change my life.

I packed my bag with a few clothes, but left almost everything else I owned behind in the flat. I even left the key so that I couldn't get back into the flat. I had no idea where I was going, I was prepared to drink my life away and live on the streets. I was prepared to do whatever God wanted me to do. I just couldn't do what I was doing anymore. I wanted to change.

I made a few phone calls and contacted the Council, they directed me to the Care Shelter. Arriving there, I expected nothing more than a bed to sleep on. But I received much more than that. I came in and told one of the Care Shelter workers that I had just become homeless. They phoned up Bethany House and arranged a place for me that night.

Walking through the doors of Bethany House that Saturday night with all I had in a bag and a hangover from the night before, I wasn't at my best, but I was greeted by the friendly face of Dougie who showed me to my room, and the bed felt so comfortable, it was like the biggest and most comfortable bed I had ever slept in. I curled up my body and had a feeling of being safe; I felt that God was with me and everything would be okay.

Over the next few days, the next step was to sign on the dole, but it never happened;



I got a job as a mechanic 2 days after arriving at Bethany House! So began my new life.

Knowing everyone in Bethany House is such a pleasure in my life. People like Kevin, Garry and Alex my addiction worker, were important people during my stay there. Bethany House is a safe haven to take a moment to re-evaluate your life and take all the help you need to make a fresh start with positive things in place. The staff go out of their way to make life more fulfilling and worthwhile. There is so much kindness in Bethany House, it is overwhelming at times. It's not the end, it's the beginning.

I've now moved into Bethany Supported Housing, attend church, help out with Bethany's Bugle magazine and I haven't had a drop of alcohol in 10 months. I even hope to volunteer for the Care Shelter this year. Who would have thought a year ago I would be where I am now?

When I look outside, the colours seem brighter and I feel like I can see the imprint of God. I thank God for giving me a second chance.

Caring Christmas Trees '07

We have been so encouraged by the results of our Caring Christmas Trees campaign over the past two years, thanks to the astounding support from you, our supporters. Christmas is fast approaching again, and yes, you guessed it, Caring Christmas Trees is back in business. We hope and pray we can sell even more trees in both Edinburgh and Fife to fund our homelessness services.

This year, we aim to sell at least 4,000 trees in Edinburgh and at least 500 trees in Fife. We cannot do this on our own; we need your support in 3 ways below:

1. Buy a Caring Christmas Tree – before 13th December. Our trees are top quality, competitively priced and freshly cut. You can choose your preferred size of tree, location for pick up (in Edinburgh and Fife) and date of pick up. We're sure you'll find a tree that will fit both your living room and your pocket.

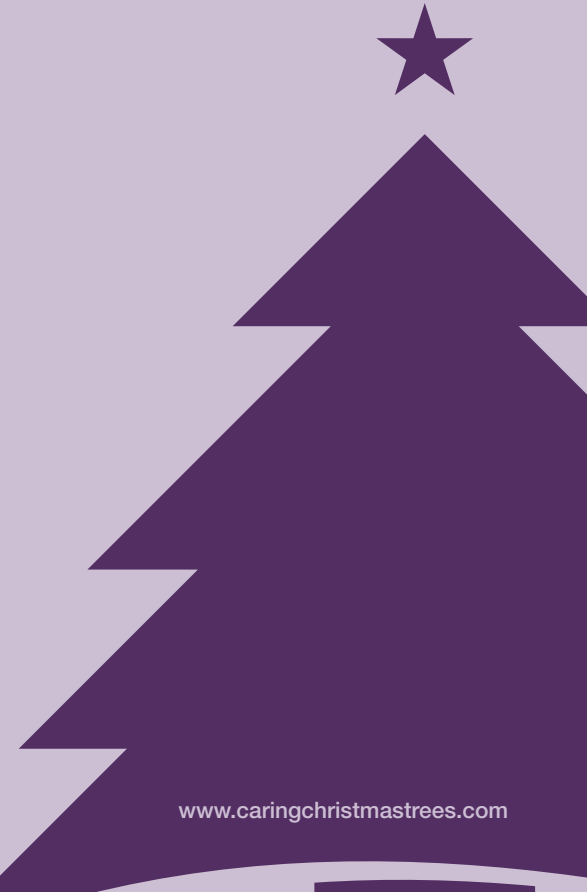
2. Volunteer 4 hours of your time – Help us help Caring Christmas Tree customers. The operational success of Caring Christmas Trees heavily depends on the help of volunteers. If you feel you have 4 hours to spare to help promote or distribute Caring

Christmas Trees, please sign up on our website. Your help will be most appreciated.

3. Tell One, Tell All – The more trees we sell the more money we raise to help the homeless and vulnerable people in your local community – it's as simple as that. We need your help to spread the word far and wide – tell your friends, relatives, neighbours, colleagues and members of your church by word of mouth, email, leaflets or announcements. Ask us for extra leaflets.



Please support Caring Christmas Trees and help a homeless person have a Happy Christmas.





Harvest Homemaker Appeal 2007

On behalf of our service users, we wish to say a big thank-you to Churches and Schools who kindly donated Harvest Goods to Bethany recently. We were delighted to receive these gifts again this year and distribute them amongst our hostels and services for homeless and vulnerable people.

Gifts of food were much enjoyed in our residential hostels-Bethany House and Bethany Christian Centre in Edinburgh and Mathew House and Martha House in West Lothian-as well as in our drop-in centres in Edinburgh, Leven and Dunfermline. In addition to these, we made up boxes of food for people living in the community and using other Bethany services such as Supported Housing, and for those able to move on from a hostel into their own tenancy.

Toiletries were also very welcome and much appreciated, as were the many household necessities received such as cutlery, towels & bed linen, pots and pans and cleaning materials to help make up starter packs for users of our Homemaker service, who are

moving into accommodation and are in need of help 'setting up' with furnishings and life's little basics, often following a spell of homelessness. All of the Harvest gifts which so many Churches and Schools were kind enough to donate have been put to very good and practical use. It was extremely encouraging to receive these Harvest gifts, which demonstrates to our service users that there are indeed people out there who care, and who sympathise with them being homeless and often without family and friends following the breakdown in relationships.

Thank you again to all who donated gifts to Bethany this Harvest for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

Bethany Christmas Cards 2007

Message inside all cards is: With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

Type of card pack of 10	Price per packs required	Number of	Charges for packing & delivery
1. Peek-a-boo reindeer	£3.95		Orders up to £15 - £1.50
2. Oh Christmas Tree	£3.95		Orders up to £50 - £3.00
3. Christmas Pudding	£3.95		Orders over £50 (in Edinburgh) - FREE
4. Wise men / Starry Night Verse: "When they saw the star, they were overjoyed" Matthew 2:10	£3.25		Orders over £50 (out of Edinburgh) - £7.00
5. Mary and Baby Jesus Verse: "Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" Luke 2:11	£3.25		
6. Illuminated Avenue	£4.25		
Total price:	-		

Please return your order to Bethany ChristianTrust, 18 Jane Street, Edinburgh, EH6 5HD. (Please allow 5 days for delivery)

Payment details

I enclose a cheque for £ _____
(made payable to Bethany Enterprises)

I authorise you to debit my Visa/Mastercard:

(please specify) for £ _____

Card No: _____

Expiry date: _____

Security No: _____
(last 3 digits on back of card)

Name On Card: _____

Address : _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____