



RAHAB

Beyond the hot chocolate!

It has been eight months since we moved to the new premises at Ermington Terrace in our City of Plymouth, when we began to function under the leadership of Keychange Charity. So I will share with you, all about what has happened to us and the women we work with on the streets since September 2010.

Creating a Newsletter can be an exciting way to reach people with up to date accounts of happenings and developments in work and ministry. Indeed, this is what is intentioned here. But truthfully, I am mostly pleased to be able to use this opportunity to write about our God, how incredible He is and the lessons He has taught us in the last few months as we embarked on this new phase of Rahab's journey:

Progress

If you recall, the transitional phase we went through last year had left the team with just 3 members to continue the outreach work on Thursday nights: People had left to begin new jobs or for health reasons. Eight months later, the team comprises 13 people! We now have 6 Street Team members who drive out to the red light area of the city and 7 Prayer Team members who stay behind and cover the outreach work with intercession. The amazing thing is that we didn't have to search, God led them to Rahab for a specific purpose and they bring with them a wealth of experience and gifts which He will use for His glory. Significantly, God spoke to us very clearly about how we utilised the prayer time on Thursday nights. He reminded us that it was as important as the street work which can be thought of as more exciting and "front line". Clearly we knew we had to change the attitude with which we conducted this time and begin to pray ceaselessly, as well as waiting on Him or reading scriptures. This process demonstrating how "to stop the flack and the bullets touching the street team" and only interrupted by calls from them for updates and new prayer requests. Fruit would grow with the women as a result of our abandonment to God in prayer and intimacy with him. Additionally, we continue to be supported by our 12 Prayer Partners who faithfully remember our work and receive weekly requests at home to be kept up to date with the women and pray for them and their children.

A new dimension of our work is the city Networking. I have begun the huge task of contacting church and ministry leaders in Plymouth to share with them about the work of Rahab and God's Love for the women. This process began in January after the Chairman's Appeal letter was sent and the radio interview with Christian community radio station Cross Rhythms, was broadcasted to the community. I had prayed at home one evening and anxiously asked God to show the way forward regarding Rahab's financial sustainability. I really felt He had answered when I woke the next day and "had" the word PowerPoint clearly printed in my head. I told myself to trust the process and go

with it, tentatively following my heart and the forming of new ideas emerging within me- Imaginings of pictures, photos and paintings- Researching for relevant powerful quotes with a missionary tone and gathering statistical information suddenly became top priority. I began to create the tool which would possibly be used by God to reach out, not knowing for sure if it would ever take place. Included in this new creative package was also a DVD compilation called "On the turning away" which displays powerful images and verses relating to our work. The DVD's message evoking a wakeup call "It's not enough just to stand and stare". So far 13 Church leaders, including business groups have been contacted with dates for speaking engagements secured. One of which being Mutley Baptist Church who is welcoming Rahab on the 3rd of July during their 3 Sunday services.

The most exhilarating element of this new venture is the incredible privilege of being part of the big picture, as people in Plymouth hear about His *tenacious* love for human beings many would perceive as lost causes, being demonstrated through the ministry of Rahab. Tenacious means holding on tight, refusing to let go...

The Drop-In

We are seeing a very gentle flow of women accessing the Drop-In, and being open on Tuesdays and Thursdays means we are available in the day time to those we interact with on Thursday nights. The small number of women who have accessed this facility have done so mostly because they were absolutely desperate: homeless, sick when no one else could meet their needs. We have helped in very practical ways by signposting them to other agencies, making appointments to doctors, contacting social services and accompanying them to the drug and alcohol service conveniently located three doors from our offices. We are grateful to God for this huge step forward in terms of what we can provide, but truthfully we remain thirsty for more. The women we see are often so needy psychologically that we realise some of them will need much more than a few phone calls or a cup of tea. Although it is a powerful start. The Spirit of God in our hearts fans divine hope for the most unlikely people, giving us a different ethos to that of the world's. Our convictions and beliefs for people are rooted in kingdom truth. We want the best for them and this means healing, transformation and freedom. Prevention is not enough. Ultimately, we long for salvation.

The future

God knows. The future of Rahab remains safe in His hands. In the mean time, we have a lot to accomplish-spreading the word, raising funds and continuing to connect with the women for whom this is all about. We do this as we relate to the words of Jesus in John 4: "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work. " For us, nothing else will do. And as the title of this Newsletter suggests, we want to go beyond the hot chocolate: Even though our nights on Thursdays are crucial as an outreach tool we can build on, we desire more than this. *More than the giving of a drink, more than a stolen conversation between punters.* We desire a special place of freedom and peace where women will find opportunities to learn about themselves and God, a place where they will come because *they* want to change and move forward. In our hearts, we are working towards this and beyond the hot chocolate. By the way, I hope you like the painting of the butterfly in the divine hands. It is called Precious. Local artist Anita Collier (www.anitacollier.co.uk) was commissioned to create the piece for Rahab by a Christian woman who has been a great support to us during our transition phase last year. The hands are God's and the butterfly represents a woman,

so fragile, whom God has transformed and set free. A woman of great value and beauty, a very dear creation, precious to us and to the King.

We saw two new women on the streets this month, and before we could introduce ourselves to them, one we knew for many years spoke these words **“You can trust them because they’re sound and they come down here to see us on the streets because even though we are prostitutes, they think we’re worth it”**.

I would like to thank the Keychange staff at Head Office in London for their help and encouragement as we established ourselves here in Plymouth these past few months. Their approachability and kindness is recognised and so appreciated. Also a big thank you to Margaret Douglas for walking such distance to raise funds for us and Door of Hope. Finally, a heartfelt thank you to Jesus, our hero and rescuer to whom we give all the praise and glory. You’re amazing Lord and we love you. So much.

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