

Bramhall Methodist Church: Surviving The Credit Crunch

Saturday 27th June 2009

The day ran from 10.00am to 2.00pm comprising:

- An exhibition zone with refreshments
- Some spiritual resources
- A seminar programme
- Chance for informal conversation

Exhibition Zone:

Stallholders:

- Beacon Counselling (a local Bramhall Church-originated Counselling service.)
- Citizen's Advice Bureau
- CVS
- Stockport Council Debt advice service is coming.
- Cheadle and Stockport Colleges
- Christians Against Poverty
- Samaritans
- We tried to get the Job centre on board but didn't manage it in time.

Tea and coffee was served throughout the day.

Spiritual Resources:

- A prayer labyrinth was arranged in church for people to spend quiet time in prayer and/or reflection. People could anonymously leave prayer requests on our prayer tree.
- We had our Prayer Support Team on duty to pray with anyone who might appreciate this.

Seminars through the day

10:30am	Feeling the Pinch
11:00am	Living with the Fear
11:30am	Down, but not out
12 noon	Getting back up
12:30pm	Stressful times
1:00pm	Feeling the Pinch

Feeling the Pinch: led by two local people who had trained to lead "Christians Against Poverty" money management course. There are plans to run this course in the autumn in the village.

Living with the Fear: Advice for those facing redundancy

Down but not out: A discussion about redundancy and retirement including a slot from a Financial Advisor about the financial effects. Some gentle spiritual input about self-worth included.

Getting back up: A recruitment advisor was recruited to speak about getting back on the employment ladder.

Stressful times: Looking at the work-life balance and how to address life that gets out of balance.

Advertising

- We had 200 A4 posters and 1000 A5 flyers printed. The flyers had an outline of the program on the back in black and white to help people know when to come and give more credibility.
- We recruited some volunteers to take posters around the shops.
- Flyers were distributed round Churches Together and Circuit/District contacts.
- We also used our Stockport interfaith co-ordinator at the council who distributed information onwards to 30-40 faith groups with whom she has contact, from various religions and denominations.
- Details appeared on the church and district website.
- We advertised the event on the Oasis Manchester business group website.
- A Facebook event/group was created to advertise the event.
- We took out an advert in the Stockport express, and in a local village brochure.
- We attempted to get it mentioned on local radio but did not succeed.

How did it go?

- We estimate that we had around 150 visitors during the day, some of whom were perhaps neutral but supportive church members, but there was a steady stream of visitors who had come for the content we were offering.
- We found that there was a definite slow down in new visitors after noon.
- The stall holders all appeared to go away happy, and were very affirming of our efforts.
- We always knew that it might not be easy for people to physically come bearing their worries and problems. We were pleased that the turnout was as strong as it was.
- We hope to be able to provide better online resources to cope with those who don't feel able to come in person.

Useful Contacts/Links:

Beacon Counselling <http://www.beacon-counselling.org.uk/>

Citizen's Advice Bureau <http://www.stockportcab.org.uk/>

CVS <http://old.stockportcvs.org.uk/>

Stockport Council Debt advice service.

<http://www.stockport.gov.uk/content/advicebenefitemergencies/Advice/debtadvice/>

Cheadle and Marple College: <http://www.camsfc.ac.uk/>

Stockport College: <http://www.camsfc.ac.uk/>

Christians Against Poverty <http://www.capuk.org>

Samaritans <http://www.samaritans.org/>

Care for the Family <http://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/>