



E News June 2026

Issue 133

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Welcome to the June edition of Street Jesus e-news. After being in the rather lovely Christian bubble at Spring harvest we are soon confronted with the realities of life when we get home. In our ministry work we have had a lot of contact with people with mental health issues. Government figures show that the benefit bill has skyrocketed since covid particularly among the young with mental ill health being cited as a major problem. In my younger life we never spoke about mental health very much, it was not something we were aware of, there was little discussion about it. There was a stigma attached to it and certain archaic terms were used to describe it and our local mental hospital St Audrys AKA The Suffolk county lunatic asylum, had a certain aura of fear attached to it. Mental illness was seen as a form of weakness, in fact feeble minded was one of the terms commonly used. Words like lunatic, cretin, mad, nutter, were all part of normal conversation. Conditions in the Asylums were crowded and low staffing levels led to task orientation and institutionalisation. Patient



aggression was not uncommon and medication was used to calm patients but largely it was a place of safety (which is what the term asylum means) from a world that neither understood nor tolerated. The staff provided structure to the day including activities known as occupational therapy. Patients had access to daily activities such as carpentry, metalwork, gardening, farm work, bakery, laundry and factory type work, there were a whole variety of sports where staff and patients competed together. There was an inter hospital games league, drama, and Art. Some time in the late 1980's early 1990's the old mental hospitals began to close, those who were institutionalised moved out to hostels or care homes. Moving from a life long structured environment led to many not being able to cope. An increase in community support meant that those with mental health problems would live less protected but more normal lives being exposed to the everyday stresses. Because it is now more visible rather than locked away we now talk about it more openly and the stigma has decreased. We now say its ok not to be ok. Since covid there has been a sharp spike in the number of young people receiving benefits due to mental health issues. Depression, anxiety eating disorders and neuro-diverse conditions such as autism and ADHD mean that many are economically inactive. Research has revealed that spending vast amounts of time on social media is now recognised as a potential cause of these. The mind is a very complex



and our thought life can be subjective. Thoughts are either triggered or they just seem to pop up like toast. What do we do with our thoughts how do we process them and what effect do they have on us and our emotions.

With mental ill health, thoughts tend to the negative or are distorted from what is real, the focus tends to be on the self, and probably exacerbated by the woes of the world and cacophony of cultural voices.

Our approach is one of listening but also to move the focus onto Jesus. Any person who lacks self esteem so that to any mind that lacks self esteem needs to know that Jesus loves us you more than we can know.

Encourage prayer where the focus moves away from the accusing inner voice to the still small voice of God. Talk about hope for a better future, the hope that we Christians have into eternity. In Romans 12 it says do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. This is not easy for us as human beings as we get easily distracted by the ways of the world, which is even more difficult if you suffer with a mental health problem. But we are to persevere as it says in Romans 5. "But we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance character and Character hope".

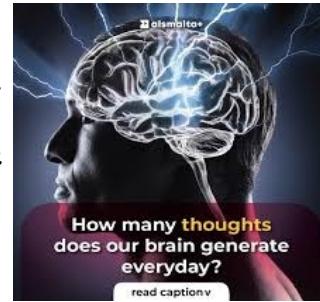


In Hebrews 12 it is described as like running a race and at the end there is a great prize. The destination though is the same for everybody whether we be first or last. The important part is to take part in the race. In our seekers group we talk a lot about the journey and that journey can take us to places we never thought possible. Regular prayer is essential to keep the right focus. Its important to

emphasise that although we know that prayer can help or even heal mental health issues this should be no substitute for prescribed medication or talking therapies like CBT. God can work through health professionals and blessing tablets or therapies as we experience them is also a positive thing. Also Giving thanks for any improvement in our condition in praise of Gods healing power. A Lady in our church who suffered years of severe depression has had her life transformed through healing prayer.

Healing and evangelism were central at this months Filling station meeting at Stratford St Andrew. The speaker Terry Baker spoke about his lifetime ministry of healing. He gave some incredible testimony of healings that he had personally been involved in. The approach is very bold and direct and always in the name of Jesus. A number of people went for anointing and healing. One of the problems we have with this kind of healing is our lack of confidence that a lung cancer (to use one of Terrys examples) cannot be fully healed by prayer. We have tried it but it didn't work so we feel like we have failed and we haven't delivered what it says on the Christian tin. But Jesus tells us that we have been given power and authority to do all that he did and more. Terry had a list of 50 significant healings in this ministry but he has prayed with hundreds more without a seeing a result. He did not focus one bit on those where healing did not take place but rejoiced in those instances where God had used them (he and his wife) to heal others. He called us to be bold.

Our Wednesday evening seekers group continues to be very interesting, We are now entering the last month before we break for the



summer. We have been going since September and covered twenty one subjects. Some subjects it has taken three weeks to complete while other weeks we have covered two subjects in one evening. Its been a very chatty group, quite challenging but we have bonded in the way God would want us to. In love and support of one another. Of the eight in the group two have made a commitment, are taking communion and are attending church regularly, two were already Christians but had drifted somewhat in their faith and both needed a boost.

Another is attending church more frequently but is still unsure about God to some degree. Another came for a few weeks found it helpful at this particular time and now feels happier in themselves.

One is very keen with a strong spiritual sense but has caring responsibilities so was not able to continue although we are keeping in touch. Another left the group early on and we sensed it was not just for them.

Our hope is that some will go on to join home groups and do more formal bible study. We see seekers as an entry gate.

In recent weeks we have covered Anger and Aggression which we also linked with Fear. Addictions including drugs, alcohol, gambling, pornography, social media, and compulsive shopping, and this week we

covered love in all its different types as well as the five love languages.

Varying viewpoints are expressed and we have somehow managed not to fall out which is remarkable as we have covered some very controversial sensitive and personal issues.

In the early weeks we talked about Christian principles, weaving Jesus into the picture of

everyday life, but as the weeks go by we introduce bible verses and passages which will help in preparation for those who may wish to join a home group.

Our prayer is that they shall all grow in their faith over time, become disciples of our dear Lord Jesus and experience the abundant life that is on offer. We give praise to God for his gift of grace to enable us to do the work we do.

Denise and I have thoroughly enjoyed the sessions and we appreciate the regular commitment of those who have joined us. With this years sessions coming to an end, we are looking forward to a break but very much thinking about starting again with a new group in September.

If you know anybody who may be interested in, or curious about the Christian faith then please give them our contact details (see header above) we would love to hear from them.

We always say that every outreach is different. At the end of March our stall was very busy. We had 12 significant conversations, mainly pastoral, listening to various troubles but faith conversations also. We naturally enjoy these days but our May outreach was very quiet in comparison.

We had a lot of general conversations, we did give out a couple of free bibles and Christian literature and the chocolates as popular as ever. These quiet days though are just as important, to maintain a visible presence, to be available and build relationships.

These relationships are so important because our whole faith is based on them . Father Son and Holy Spirit are in perfect harmony and the relationship God has with us is the one we need to have with others. We wonder what our June outreach will bring? God Bless Graham





The Filling Station is an informal way of expressing the Christian Faith, using celebration meetings to encourage the local church, predominantly in rural areas across the UK.

Please visit the website for details.

What to expect when we meet:

A warm welcome with light refreshments... Contemporary worship led by local worship leaders... Stories of God at work today... Guest Speakers to refresh our faith... Prayer together for worldwide and personal needs...

The Riverside Centre, Stratford St Andrew
Refreshments at 7pm for a 7:30 start.

Everyone is Welcome

<https://thefillingstation.org.uk/>

All Saints
Wickham Market

SS Peter & Paul
Tottistree

OPEN DOOR

LOVE

Coffee, tea,
biscuits and
friends

Friday morning
Drop in from
10:00am

At All Saints Church
Every Friday Morning

Network SUFFOLK

Connecting Christian Communities in Suffolk

GOOD NEWS

www.goodnews-paper.org.uk

Evangelistic Newspaper

**All Saints Church
Wickham Market**

Prayer & Praise Evenings
3rd Sunday of the month
at 6:30pm

Informal service for all ages



Every third Sunday of the month at 11am
All Saints Church, refreshments from 10.30am



Oasis

Informal Service @ All Saints Church
3pm every Second Sunday. All invited!

**A time of worship, fellowship,
and light refreshments.**

Meet old friends and make new ones

May love be at the centre
of all my thoughts today,
before words are formed,
spoken, or written down,
before any damage is done.
For I know my thoughts
are not always yours, Lord,
and words can cause pain,
because I see this world
through my perspective,
and therein the problem lies.
So, let your love abide within
my heart, and from it flow,
that I might build bridges,
not fences, and understand
and begin to love those
who see things differently,
as a brother, sister, friend.

*The Lord is my strength
and my shield; my
heart trusts in him, and
he helps me.
Psalm 28:7*



May outreach - Wickham Market

Still Waters

In the style of Lectio Divina, time to dwell
together on God's word

Join us at the Wickham Market vicarage on the
second and fourth Mondays of each month

2 pm, all welcome, just come along and see if it
is for you



Mike and Denise all wrapped up warm for the Royal British legion celebrations on the hill.

A graphic with a red background. At the top is a large white cross. Below it, the words 'STREET JESUS' are written in large, bold, black capital letters. In the center, there are four black silhouettes of people walking away from the viewer on a grey path that leads towards the cross. The path has white dashed lines. The entire graphic is framed by a black border.

Our next outreach is on
Wickham Market Hill
on Saturday June 20th 9am–3pm

A small version of the 'Street Jesus' logo, featuring a white cross on a red background with the text 'STREET JESUS' and silhouettes of people walking on a path.

Check out our
facebook page
[www.facebook.com/groups/
1246450225452294](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1246450225452294)