

Reflection 11 - Always There

This week we have reopened St Paul's for private prayer. It is great that we are able to do that and much thanks goes to John Tull and Ian Gardiner who have helped to develop the risk assessments so we could do it safely. We had role descriptions ready including offering someone who could pray with people if they wanted that. We had some candles lit and some gentle music playing in the background. All good to go!

Of course what we can't mitigate for is people coming along. Tonight (Thursday) in the 2 hours we were in the church we didn't have anyone come through the doors. It is a slightly odd one, in that it's not the type of ministry that you can try and fish people off the street for, it is ultimately for people to see and choose to move towards.



ALWAYS LISTENING

Though it was great that the building is back open, I must say, I felt a bit dejected that no-one came to us. Whilst I was chatting to one of the team, they highlighted that God must feel like this with us sometimes too. He is always there waiting to hear our cries to him, waiting just to be in conversation with us, waiting to be the father who cares for his child.

Jer. 29:12 says, *"Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you".*

1 John 5:14 says, *'This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us'.*

And as with the offer we are making as a church to come and meet God for private prayer is a choice to be made by the community, it is our decision to go to God as his children and take him up on the offer, that he will listen to us.

God is always wanting to spend time with his children and listen to their requests for help, their shouts of joy, even their grumbings, but we have to make that step into his presence. But of course the good news is that it doesn't mean just coming into a church building, our heavenly father is everywhere and we can speak to him anywhere. As I said in my talk on Sunday, God is the God of the unexpected.

So this week, I would encourage you to try to seek God in all that you do, in the everyday jobs and in the unusual places: speak to him on your bike; in a cafe; as you're putting the bins out. God longs to converse with us, but we have to make that choice to talk to him and he is always there.