

'Mission in a time of chaos' – Caz Pinder

So, Blackburn Diocese put out an Easter campaign to encourage crosses in windows.

“In response to the situation – a consequence of the coronavirus lockdown – Diocesan Bishop, Rt Rev. Julian Henderson, the Bishop of Blackburn, is encouraging every Christian home in Lancashire, of all denominations, to make a cross in the best way they can and place it in their window, leaving it there throughout Holy Week.

The cross can be made of paper, card, wood or (if available) palm leaves – people can be as imaginative as they like! The idea takes inspiration from other initiatives which have taken off recently – such as drawing rainbows to be placed in windows”.



Initially I made a poster saying, ‘This Is Holy Week’, then I saw several different crosses being posted on Twitter, some quite large and in gardens. So, I decided to make a Rainbow Cross out of wood and hang it at the front of the house. Several neighbour’s commented on the cross, which brought about conversation regarding how they were feeling regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and how this was affecting their lives.

I could hear God encouraging me to think about the community in which I lived, how often I picked up rubbish to keep the street clean and tidy because I love the street and the people who live there. How could I support them now in this their time of need? God continued to hearten me, into arranging a street prayer meeting. The thoughts in my head were ‘wouldn’t it be great if we could all come together in prayer. But also, alongside these thoughts there were negative thoughts, ‘well what if they laugh at you or no one turns up’, you will make yourself look silly. But God was reassuring me and telling me He was at my side, despite the fear I felt. I prayed about it and listened to some worship music, Zach Williams ‘Fear is a Liar was dancing round in my head and then the words do not be afraid filled me and I turned to Isaiah 41:10 (NRSV)

‘do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you, with my victorious right hand’.

God did just as he promised, He was with me all the way, Amen.

I posted the letter to all my neighbour’s and handed it over to God. When I first went out there were only two people on the street but as I waited with my husband and daughter, two more people appeared and the two more, and another and so on... in my head I was saying thank you Jesus, thank Lord.

It was clear people were waiting for me to lead, fortunately I have a loud voice because I had to shout as the street is quite long. It was quite emotional but well received. Some people asked about the rainbow cross and I explained. We said goodnight and agreed to keep in touch and help each other.

The following morning in a neighbour’s window a rainbow cross had appeared, I was jumping for joy for Jesus. Never in my wildest dreams did I expect that. How fantastic or what!!!

1 John 4:7(NRSV) Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; ‘everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love’. This verse makes it clear that we need to love each other because God is love. Amen

Letter and prayer for Rickard Road.

Hi to everyone who lives on Rickard Road.

It is Caz Pinder from no 7.

I just thought, given the circumstances we currently find ourselves in, it would be really nice if we could all join each other at 7:45 on the street. (social distancing rules apply please) for a short prayer for us, our families and all those who are struggling in this difficult time. I know some of you may not believe in God, but prayer is powerful and can help us all. Thought we could then give Boris a clap together for a speedy recovery.

This is the prayer I thought we could say together.

Lord, it would be so easy for us all to be in our homes feeling sorry for ourselves,
for us to be fretting about the long hours of isolation.

For us all to be worrying about what might happen to us and our loved ones,
but what good would that do any of us?

It definitely won't change the current situation we all find ourselves in.

So Lord we thank you for this short time of prayer together, we recognise we need to offer each
other support and to turn to you Jesus, in our need.

So Lord, we ask you to watch over all of us, to bless and keep our loved ones safe.

Lord, we also ask you to help us think of others,
and to ask ourselves whether we can help someone else who maybe struggling.

We ask you God to help the people of Rickard Road, for us to stay in touch and help each other
in this time of difficulty.

To show concern, offer companionship, and express love and support for each other.
in your name Jesus

Amen.

With love, hope grace and peace
Caz Pinder

