



West End Refugee Service

strength through support



Issue 70: July 2017

The response to our funding appeal continues to be amazing! Thank you so much for your support!

WERS' volunteers out and about helping in the community... at Haltwhistle Plant Festival...

This year WERS had been chosen as the charity to benefit from the festival's proceeds, which was fantastic!

WERS volunteers worked alongside festival volunteers in the café, on the plant stalls, in the car park and on the WERS stall. Everyone got to know each other as the day progressed and it was a great occasion.



WERS' Hardship Fund supporting destitute asylum seekers benefitted to the tune of £1,500 – a wonderful total! A huge thank-you to the organisers.

and in the West End...

West End United Reformed Church held a 'Great Get Together' community day in memory of Jo Cox earlier this month.

WERS' volunteers helped throughout the day. The sun shone and it was a lovely day!



A poem by a Sri Lankan client of WERS was recently featured in an exhibition at Discovery Museum showcasing the work of asylum seekers and refugees:

*I have heard waterfalls of love and kindness but
Never been there instead of a few moments in a dream.
But
When my journey started from home I was very
confident of finding those miracle waterfalls for the life.
When we stepped to the land where the waterfalls of
love and kindness were,
We could hear those were showering far away from us
and knew they were still there.*

*Finally, when we reached those, we could notice the
strength of the waterfalls of love and kindness was not
as strong as we thought.
But..... even with the low strength, Love and kindness still
showering to people who are desperately looking for
mercy..
So we thanked God for their remaining love and kindness
of waterfalls even with low strength.... Suddenly flashed
a thunder of thought in an empty mind of sky
To acknowledge is a diamond worth of message,
"All of you must protect and care all those remaining
waterfalls of love and kindness, You have not protected
those in your lands and this is your last opportunity"
Now we all know that message was crystal clear. And
Are we ready to protect those VALUES of this land...?*

Sam Walker

By kind permission

Earlier this month WERS was pleased to welcome two students on the Council for World Mission (CWM) 'Face to Face' 2017 programme: Freedom from the Clutches of Empire, Face to Face with Migration and Human Trafficking. The course is designed for students who are preparing for ministry.

The programme sought to challenge the students to engage with the realities of how the fullness of life is being denied to a large majority of the world's population. The programme exposed participants to a context other than their own, stimulating theological reflection, encouraging sensitivity to people of other cultures and motivating people to engage in mission.

Lanja from Madagascar and Joseph from the Philippines were on placement with us for a month and we very much enjoyed having them with us.



Joseph has been leading the local Church of the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) Quezon City as its lay pastoral leader. MCC is a global denomination founded in 1968 as a church for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community. MCC has been at the vanguard of civil and human rights movements by addressing issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, economics, climate change, ageing, and global human rights. MCC was the first to perform same-gender marriages and has been at the forefront of the struggle towards marriage equality in the USA and other countries worldwide.

Joseph will be finishing his MDiv degree in April 2018 and hopes to be ordained in MCC by 2019. He also wants to pursue further units in Chaplaincy to

do Chaplaincy work with people living with HIV and AIDS in his country.

'I am praying and hoping that I can replicate, transpose and contextualize the organizational model of WERS through my Filipino Church context back home in the Philippines. Certainly, though WERS is a secular organization, it is a church that is not a church that is able to care and support the lost and the stranger in this part of the word.

Often times the greatest thing we can do for people is walk and struggle with and for them, and WERS is doing just that in a marvellous way.

Salamat ng Marami - Thank you very much!'

(Cristopher Joseph San Jose)

'For asylum seekers and refugees, for destitute and homeless, WERS is the place where they could feel at home far away from home, and sometimes without any home. When you're down, and troubled and if you need some loving care, because nothing is going right, it is always fine if you have somebody who helps you, if you have got a friend. If Newcastle is a City of Sanctuary, WERS is a sanctuary within a sanctuary. One witness told that before he was surviving, now he is living; because that is the aim of WERS, giving life to others.'

(Herilanjavalona Ratsimba Rabeniaina, Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar)

SAVE THE DATE!
WERS Annual General Meeting
3rd October 2017
6.00pm
Westgate Baptist Church

Office details:

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