

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. *Isaiah 43:1 [NIV]*

Faith not Fear

We recognise the fear, uncertainty and worry that many people will be experiencing at this time during the Coronavirus pandemic. We pray:

“Lord Jesus, you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need. In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful and to assure the isolated of our love. Please give strength and resilience to all who are working so hard in our National Health Service and for those searching for a cure. Sustain and support all of us, and help us to know that you are with us and nothing can separate us from your love.” Amen

At this time of year, our thoughts normally reflect on the Easter message. This has real resonance now. At the time, immediately before our LORD's resurrection, there was fear, anxiety and doubt. After Christ's death by crucifixion we know that three days later he miraculously rose again; before some 40 days later, physically ascending back into heaven. And, shortly before he did so, Matthew (28: 16-20) describes how *‘Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey*

everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

This wonderful passage, known as ‘The Great Commission’ was the command, the instruction and the act of commissioning. Of course they did go and we know that this small group established the Christian church. These disciples had been through a real learning curve over the previous 3½ years. They'd seen Jesus perform many miracles and they had experienced the work, teaching and outcomes of Jesus' ministry. They had also seen him arrested, crucified and die but then rise again to life. At the culmination of all this they were called back together by the risen Christ for one last time – to be commissioned and sent out.

These disciples – soon to be ambassadors, teachers, evangelists and prophets, holding the entire earthly responsibility for the launching and establishment of the worldwide Christian church; hesitated, doubted and some were unsure. However, despite their doubts and fears, Jesus still held total faith and confidence in their ability to succeed, given that he already knew what they would achieve in His Name.

So what of us today as Christians, as supporters, members, leaders of the Christian Police Association, especially when our society and the wider world is currently facing anxiety and fear about the future. We might think we should always feel inspired, excited and empowered about ‘walking the talk’ or ‘going out to preach the gospel’. Well, maybe. But perhaps it's more likely that we find ourselves sometimes feeling hesitant, uncertain, lost for words and worried at this time. However, Jesus didn't curtail his great commission in

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view of the anxiety and uncertainty of the future, He loved the disciples and knew that their time had arrived. And with the benefit of history we know that the disciples did go out, they did preach the gospel, they did baptise and they did establish Christ's church.

And what of us this Easter time? No doubt you had lots of plans, for yourself, your family, for CPA, that in each you'll be about God's work – his great commission in your life. Yet, especially now, as we face social distancing, significant restrictions on our daily lives and for many,

self-isolation for a considerable period of time, you will also have questions. You will hold doubts and you probably feel hesitant and cautious. Well, be assured, that's OK, as despite that, if you continue to hold fast to the belief that the future remains in God's hands – he simply asks us, with all our understandable worries, to still step forward in his great commission and to be light to others.

Please visit our website for a range of information that we hope you will find useful during this difficult time

www.cpauk.net/virus-help



Focus on Peter Stacey – Branch Leader for Leicestershire CPA

As all schools and places of education are likely to be closed for many months, we wanted to bring you an encouraging article that Peter (our Branch Leader of Leicestershire CPA) recently wrote for an article in a magazine called "Impact". This particular magazine is produced by Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF); an organisation and

charity that Peter used to work/volunteer for, after he graduated from Loughborough University in 2010. The UCCF's aim is to support Christian Unions in Colleges and Universities (whether affiliated to the Students Union or not) across the UK and they have a National network of staff, volunteers and supporters. When we read this article, we asked Peter if he could extend his testimony for readers of the CPA, and he kindly agreed. Like Peter we hope his testimony is encouraging to our CPA members, to those students already in the Christian Unions and for those who are hoping to be starting at University this year.

"In 2007 I arrived at Loughborough University to study Criminology and Social Policy and was greeted at the gate entrance to the campus by Christian Union (CU) members handing out flyers. I had come from a

Christian background and during my teenage years had questioned my beliefs. It was a great encouragement to meet the CU as soon as I got to university.

My time at university turned out to be an abundance of Christian fellowship, service (serving and being served), teaching and love and one that I look back on with much fondness. It wasn't without its challenges but I was immersed in the Christian community of church and CU. One of the biggest lessons I learnt through my time at university was that God is faithful and fulfils His promises. We continuously saw God faithfully provide the CU with the funds needed to make things happen through the gracious generosity of many local (and some not so local) Christian supporters, as well as CU members themselves.

In 2010 I graduated but remained in Loughborough as a Relay Worker, as I wanted to be able to continue to support the CU's work. Relay was such a challenging year for me. I learnt a lot about my sin, my weaknesses and my huge, ever-increasing need for grace and forgiveness. I learnt more about how I selfishly turn situations into being about me, when everything in this world was created through and for Jesus and His glory. I was able to spend a decent amount of time exploring and digging into the Scriptures alone and in a group, learning some basics of leading a Bible study and giving the occasional CU talk (although I was extremely nervous about that last one).

In summer 2013, I became an operational Police Constable for Leicestershire Police. If I thought Relay was hard, being a police officer is a whole new level! I don't think I'm a good witness to my colleagues by any

stretch of the imagination, but Jesus can, and does, use me in spite of all my many mistakes, failures and weaknesses. Jesus calls us to love our neighbours, to serve, to reflect the goodness of Him to others and to 'overcome evil with good' (Romans 12:21). Christians need to be represented in our Forces across the UK to bring the hope and life-changing message of the gospel to the police and public alike. I never know what my day will bring – I can and do experience a lot of fear – but I'm learning to trust God with every shift and I'm steadied by my faith when faced with despair, frustration, disappointment and evil.

I loved my time with the CU and am still convinced about the importance of the opportunities it provides other students to come and meet the Lord Jesus for themselves. I'm still keeping on in the faith as best I can, with many challenges. God is still faithful, His plan is still better than anything I could come up with and He's still giving much grace and showing me His love. I hope to continue to develop my relationships with those pertinent to my roles as both Beat Officer for Loughborough University but also CPA Branch Leader."

You can follow Peter on Twitter at [@LboroUniPolice](https://twitter.com/LboroUniPolice)

Rugby Revive – an update from Dave Valente (CPA Branch Leader and Trustee) recognising the excellent work of Matthew Hopley (Force Chaplain) – Warwickshire Police

Authenticity matters to people, and this is recognised within Policing. The College of Policing Values Framework highlights how we do things, is equally important to what we do.

The appointment of our Force Chaplain Matthew Hopley has been much welcomed from a CPA perspective. He aims to appoint Chaplain volunteers, to increase capacity for this support for colleagues at work.

Such a fruitful partnership with CPA and the Chaplaincy is a great testimony to our Police colleagues. Matthew is supportive of the distribution of New Testaments to the many student Officers now arriving in Force. He will also be leading on events like the Carol Service, and his activities provides an extra 'crossing of the bridge' we aim to build between the Christian community and the Police.

Recently Matthew helped The Revive Network bring together churches from across the borough who prayed for all of the officers, staff, volunteers and partner agencies that serve the community. Matthew addressed the gathered congregations encouraging them to continue to do good in the communities they serve.

During the service a video was played from Chief Superintendent Ben Smith thanking those gathered for taking the time to pray for the force and the teams who work so hard.

A letter was also read by Detective Chief Inspector Jill Fowler who wrote to Revive also thanking them. She

said: "We are truly appreciative of your thoughts and prayers and would ask you to continue to pray for this team and our wider policing family, as your support gives us encouragement, hope and a sense of community spirit, which keeps us going when things are tough."

Areas of prayer focussed upon included: Wellbeing of Warwickshire Police officers, staff and volunteers; the continued growth of a positive culture within the force, County Lines and the impact on society, Reduction in violent offences, the survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation, and for the teams to successfully identify and prosecute offenders. In addition prayers were asked for the strength to avoid the temptation of corruption or abuse of power and for the successful appointment of new Volunteer Chaplains

The church leaders of Rugby thanked the Police for all their hard work and continued efforts in protecting the county from harm, and for championing peace. In return, we thank Matthew Hopley for all he is doing and we cover all his activities in prayer. We thank all the Church Leaders for their prayers. It is so encouraging for all officers (regardless of their faith or none) to have this support.



... and finally from the Director

The Coronavirus pandemic has radically altered our way of life, to a degree that hasn't been experienced for generations. At the CPA, we continue to adapt to the restrictions in place and we support them fully. Many of our CPA members are on the frontline of policing these restrictions. We all can, by following the HM Government advice, help our NHS save lives. There will be a time when life does return to normality, and we need to remember that; to remember to be kind, helpful and considerate to all people. And we need to trust in the future, with faith, not fear. Our prayers and thoughts are with you all.

Lee Russell MA – Executive Director



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OUR MISSION is to

- Be a National Voice for Christians in Policing.
- Encourage and support Christians in the Police Service.
- Communicate in words and action, the truth, message and hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ to colleagues and the community we serve.
- Build bridges between the Christian community and the Police.

OUR VISION is to see

- The CPA as a national charity which actively leads on issues relevant to Christians in Policing.
- An active and growing branch of CPA in every Police Service in the UK and every Christian in the Police Service to fulfil their potential in Jesus Christ.
- Colleagues and those we serve to know Jesus Christ personally.
- Police and Churches working together in every community to reduce crime and improve quality of life.

President Deputy Chief Constable Paul Netherton **Chair of Council A/Inspector** Marie Reavey

Executive Director Lee Russell **Executive Support Manager** Tony Gale **Editor** Allan Spencer **Administrator** Lindsey Monk

ON & OFF DUTY is the CPA monthly digest of news and articles. We also update a monthly Prayer Diary intended to inform and encourage those associated with the CPA. Please forward any items to office@CPAuk.net by the 20th of each month.

NB. All articles published will also be available for unrestricted viewing via the Internet. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the CPA Council.

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