

Dear Chapel family,

Thanks for your thoughtful letter. We are doing well physically and spiritually. We are plugging away developing leadership and modeling our ministry called Transformational Community For You. This is how we see the church—emphasizing community. Christ is head as a relational, creator God, who, in turn, created us for relationship. If we are going to invite new people to join Christ's community we need to model it even though it is difficult in our busy world.

Richmond based author, Fritz Kling tells us the world is increasingly aware of these trends:

- Globalization and youth culture
- Mercy and Justice
- International Student ministry
- Islam and how it is affects our world.
- Migration of peoples
- Mutuality and partnership
- Major shifts in economic and geopolitical power

Being aware of these trends allows us to minister in a rapidly changing world while using the past as a learning tool. But looking beyond the here and now to where the people, the world, and the church might be in 10 years.

Our congregation is made up of over 35 language groups. We are located in the town center, with a hugely multicultural population. Indians, Pakistani's, Arabs, Polish, etc., all live along side the English people who make up less than half of the population. Although there has been some violence between these diverse groups we generally live in harmony. However this Sunday the English Defense League is planning a protest regarding the growth and influence of Islam in the UK. Pray for peace and calm, as there is also a counter demonstration. Needless to say one big prayer concern is to retain good relationships between the diverse populations in Slough. We have developed a working relationship with the leadership of some local Mosques. Some have even come to faith!

In addition to a foreign mission program, we are heavily involved in three local mercy ministries which lead to opportunities for witnessing. A large proportion of our people are involved.

Our Street Angels ministry takes to the streets on weekend nights, when drunkenness is an issue especially young people binge drinking. Between 9pm and 2am our "street angels" offer: a listening ear, assistance to the police, coffee, flip flops for girls who have fallen or lost their high heel shoes, and call cabs. We do this in partnership with other town center Christians. We are the primary organizer in this community effort by local churches.

We also have a food bank ministry that gives out food parcels to homeless, recently released prisoners, and young families. They come with vouchers issued by other community organizations. Last year we distributed over 10 tons of food. This is distributed from our church building though the food is stored in a local warehouse, which was donated by a local business.

Every Wednesday we offer our building as a night shelter for approximately 15 homeless people. They are bussed to us and we provide warmth, a simple meal and someone to speak to. Our volunteers feed the homeless while working one of three shifts through the night. Six other sites are used on the other nights of the week. This cooperative effort is organized and run by a local charity.

We have found that in serving the local community our folks are more keenly aware of world missions, and interact with cultures they wouldn't otherwise have contact with. Prayerfully this will break down barriers of our traditional English reserve, which we all feel, causing even the most well-meaning Christian to withdraw from the world around them.

My challenge to Williamsburg Community Chapel is to look around. What is changing? What local trends need addressing? How can the community of believers really get engaged? To address these issues there is a cost and the biggest one may be your precious time.

I'll leave you with a quote from Wayne Gretzky, the hockey great. "Most of my success comes from the fact that I skate to where the puck is going to be, NOT where it has been."

In Christ.

Friends of the Chapel