

Northampton District Chaplaincy Policy

The Northampton District is committed to support, encourage and resource wherever possible a wide range of existing chaplaincies and the lay and ordained persons who exercise ministry within the District in the following areas:

Higher Education
Further Education
Healthcare (including mental health)
Hospice & Palliative Care
Schools
Police/Fire/Ambulance (Blue Light)
Armed Forces
Auction Marts, Farmers Markets & Rural Life
Prisons and YOI
Community Development/New Housing
Workplace including....
Town Centre
Retail
Social care
Residential care
Community care of the elderly
Airports
GP surgeries

The Northampton District seeks to develop chaplaincy as a model of ministry that is not only a specialist area of ministry but also one which every minister (and every disciple) can participate. The two key theological themes undergirding this approach both stem from the New Testament and can be found in Matthew 28: 16-20.

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore 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 that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

This section of scripture is often referred to as The Great Commission and is sometimes seen as a command to the first disciples to go out from Jerusalem on a disciple-making mission. Some commentators, however, have encouraged readers to see the words of Jesus as less of a command and more of an invitation to be attentive to the world as they move around in it, "As you go, make more disciples" thus suggesting a mode of engagement with the world which pays it, and those we encounter, attention. Others have suggested the passage might be read,

“As you go, teach the nations how to be faithful to the living Word”.

We note that this mode of attentiveness is echoed in the ministry of Jesus who declares we meet God in those in prison, those in need, those who are vulnerable and those who lack resources (Matthew 25:35-40). We are called to be attentive to those of every faith, and none. We are called to walk together and engage with those we meet as companions, as on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)

Our two chosen emphases of chaplaincy in the District are that:

1. We are all, lay and ordained, called to live out our faith through an active and intentional **attention** and **engagement** in and to the communities we are a part of.
2. We are all, lay and ordained, called to be **faithful people** at the heart of our communities, not withdrawing from them, nor accepting their values or ethos without question but rather **offering a faithful, loving service** which equally values and includes the diverse range of people in the world we are part of and belong to.

Our aim is for every local Church in every Circuit in the District to be friends with their community and offer it loving service.

Our aim is for every minister in the District to offer at least one session (3 hours) per week in loving service to a part of a community served by a local Church and circuit.

A mapping of chaplaincy services within the District will be undertaken in 2018-19 and every three years after that.

An annual day Conference will be held in the District for chaplains (lay and ordained, paid and voluntary) as an opportunity for networking, peer support, action learning and resourcing.

The District Prayer Handbook and Directory will identify those who offer chaplaincy within the District as fully as possible.