

# News Update

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### News Update Spring 2021



**WHAT A YEAR!**- Since our last letterbox Newsletter, CIE has never been busier! The media has given a picture of the entertainment business being in meltdown and in a dangerous and unprecedented situation. Perhaps what some may see as an over-dramatic view has enabled wider society to see that its not all `glitz and glamour and millionaire celebrities`. Perhaps this media highlighting, offering an insight into the personal struggles involved, may encourage more churches to see the value of praying for the industry and in particular, more will support Arts & Entertainment Sunday on April 11<sup>th</sup> this year.

For CiE the lockdown has underlined some of the main issues currently facing those in the business which include: Lack of income; Isolation; Loss of confidence; Loss of self-worth; Embarrassment at being recognised when doing other work if they are known TV faces; Questions about whether they should remain in the profession and will they still be `wanted`;

New graduates from Drama Schools being unable to find work; Feeling out of touch with the profession and an inability to feel positive and ready for future auditions; Dancers and physical performers struggle to remain on form with a potential loss of incentive; Guilt over being offered work when your colleagues remain unemployed; Older actors cut from shows due to virus vulnerability and fears of long careers suddenly coming to an end; Exhaustion related to the start-stop-cancelled-hopes-dashed environment which creates huge uncertainty; A sense of powerlessness to improve your situation; An inability to forecast when the effects will be over, with a feeling of hopelessness to plan ahead and provide hope; The effects of a frozen career on a disrupted family life and marriage; The anxiety over lockdown easing and how will that affect individuals.

Alongside this, there is no doubt that the devastating impact of lockdown has caused a new sense of openness and questions about Christian faith. The need for pastoral support `on the ground, `at the marketplace`, and `within the profession` is more acute than ever. Understanding these issues helps CiE maintain a real source of spiritual encouragement and support. As we look to the future, well-armed, with fresh insight and new challenges, I am excited about which doors God will open, and grateful for your support and prayers as we walk with him day by day.

**4@4 VIDEO SERIES-** The need to reach out and support those professionally trapped in lockdown has inspired the on-going development of our 4@4 Video series, aired on Facebook each Wednesday at 4pm and streamed to the CiE Website simultaneously. We are thrilled that we have been able to offer hope to 300 regular followers with some posts reaching 1,408 viewings. Rev Cindy and Rev Rosemary`s regular contributions, together with Pastoral Assistant David Birch and special guest presenters has helped keep the weekly posts fresh and reaching out in different ways. The Kintsugi Charity helped us produce a series focussing on faith and mental health, whilst our Valentine`s Day card project was successful in reminding many in the business that they were still loved, and that they should keep going. We continue to stay in touch with a large group of individuals by phone, text and Zoom.

**REMEMBERING THE LAUGHTER-MAKERS-** In the last few months, we`ve lost some of our best-loved laughter makers; Ken Dodd, Eddie Large, Bobby Ball, Roy Hudd, Des O`Connor, Peter Goodwright, Tim Brooke Taylor. Interestingly, many of these held a strong faith, believing that their ability to create laughter was a heavenly gift. Bobby, Peter, Doddy and Roy were good friends to me and to CIE for 40 years and more. They were all wonderful ambassadors for God`s laughter medicine, often reaching out to many who would not otherwise have been interested in church. It has been a sad time but filled with very happy memories too. Please pray for Bobby, Roy and Doddy`s wives and Peter`s family. Also, for Tommy Cannon and Hazel, Syd Little and Sheree and remember others that God has given the gift of laughter to, for our benefit.



#### **NEW VIDEO FOR ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT SUNDAY - APRIL 11<sup>th</sup>!**

We need your prayers more than ever this year- and to guide churches and individuals how to pray, we are launching a new video prayer featuring singers, dancers, musicians, comedians, magicians and creatives from London`s West-End and beyond. This short, four-minute video will be available for your church or house group to use as part of their Sunday service and will also be available for you to share from our Facebook, You Tube and Website. Please ask your church leaders if they can spare a few minutes to screen our

special video prayer on April 11<sup>th</sup>. *The Arts Centre Group, Catholic Association of Performing Arts and Theatre Chaplaincy UK* join us as we all want to encourage as much prayer support and understanding as possible that day. Sunday April 11<sup>th</sup> coincides with the annual BAFTAs, which offers a helpful reminder of the creative work around us. Churches and individuals across the UK and abroad will be part of this nationwide day of prayer- but the need doesn`t stop there- please continue to spare a prayer for an industry that has been devastated this year.

*Chris Gidney - Director*



**DAVID BIRCH- Actor, Singer, Dancer and CiE's Pastoral Assistant offers a view from the inside!** Perhaps hope is a word that has been bandied around too much? For those of us caught in the entertainment lockdown, hope has been standing in an empty theatre dreaming of an audience's return. Its been over a year since the first lockdown and we have seen some pretty tough, life changing times as we wait for the industry to recover. During this time, I have been challenged to see what real hope looks like. For the first time, we have seen so many creatives all in the same boat, looking towards that distant horizon and yearning to release their passion to perform again. It's what we were made for. Its what God has given us the skills for. It is what we long to do.

We have tried to adapt to the many changes. The sudden starts-and-stops of reopening hope, dashed by cancellation followed by immense uncertainty. Do I still have a career? Does God still want me to be in this business? Will I see my confidence as a performer shattered? What do I do next? These are just a tiny example of the questions that those in every area of our profession have been asking for months. Only God knows the answer. Through the love, prayers and support shown to our profession and your prayers, many are discovering a new, and deep, God-given creativity. Not just with people creating albums in their homes, writing scripts and presenting plays via zoom, but developing and growing existing skills, and above all, learning a new patience and trust in God. God's incredible love which quietly reaches into the depths of people's hearts and stirs them. Much like rowing and seeing the boat making waves in the water with each stroke. We still have a long way to row, with many more storms to face, but we have learnt that it is Jesus Christ himself who is with us as we row. He isn't distant and afar, but in the boat with us, ushering, inspiring and encouraging us forward, to keep creating. This is not false optimism, but true hope. We fix our eye on the goal, whatever the `weather` knowing that Christ is our living hope.

Today, you may be looking at your `life's-boat` with fear. Perhaps you worry that you no longer have the strength to pull the oars? Maybe you just feel that you have lost your incentive? I want to encourage you to look beyond your own strength. Jesus is right there with you. Knowing that you are not alone, I want to persuade you to jump inside, grab the oars and just start rowing. It won't be long before the way ahead becomes clearer. As my favourite line in the film Prates of the Caribbean says, "Now- let's see that horizon!". Stay focused. Stay hopeful. Stay blessed.



**Rev Rosemary says,** Hi...! I am Rev Rosemary, CiE's Prayer Chaplain. What do I do? I pray! It's been a horrendous time for all those at every level of the entertainment profession, so how wonderful that we have been able to pray- but how and what do we pray?

During these months of restrictions, the needs have increased in the Arts & Entertainment world, as Chris's list of issues facing the professions show. Venues closed and contracts terminated have brought stress, anxiety and hard times, as hopes are raised and dashed about the present and future. There have been requests for God's guidance about decisions, housing, finances and work opportunity and desperate pleas for healing and recovery for loved ones with Covid.

Requests come via text, Email or phone and are treated confidentially. When names are known to me, I bring the name and need before the Lord. When anonymous, I bring the need, knowing the Lord knows the person. Prayer includes listening to God as well as talking. Scripture and testimony are means of `hearing` the voice of God speak into our situations. CIE offers this through the 4@4 and prayer videos on Facebook, to which I have contributed. The prayer line will not stop when the pandemic ends. Thanks will be given and prayers continue for your particular needs. Don't hesitate to contact C.I.E. through Email; [prayer@ciweb.org.uk](mailto:prayer@ciweb.org.uk), text or phone **07517 661016**. Do pray for yourselves and each other. "Devote yourselves to prayer keeping alert in it with thanksgiving." - Colossians 4 v.2.

### Join us on Facebook!

Rev Cindy – CIE's Social Media Chaplain- makes regular posts on our Facebook Page, along with all our regular news, so please `like us` there and be part of the Christian voice in the entertainment business.



**Thank you! Your support & every gift, no matter how small, is invaluable to the continuation of our work.**

**Thank you again for helping us reach into showbiz with the love of Christ!**  
**PO Box 223 Bexhill on Sea East Sussex TN40 9DP Registered Charity Number 801327**

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