

Care Home Blessing Actions Briefing for Leaders

1. Why are we taking action now?

- Leeds Citizens and Citizens UK are calling for a Living Wage for all key workers, with the current focus of the campaign on the social care sector.
- **We're urging the UK government to provide a £1.4bn funding settlement for the social care sector so that all social care employees can be raised up to the real Living Wage.**
- Many people in our member organisations either work in the social care sector or are recipients of care. Some of our member organisations have heard testimonies of hardship and injustice from care workers, particularly during COVID-19.
- **We understand the UK government is considering a range of new spending commitments over the next month to respond to the challenges of COVID-19. This presents us with a unique opportunity if we can act quickly in the next couple of weeks.**



What does a care home blessing look like?

See this video of a successful care home blessing from St Mary & All Saint's Church, Beaconsfield with Rev Dr Jeremy Brooks and The Right Revd Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=686209385565653>

The entire action takes about 8 minutes.

2. How do I conduct a care home blessing?

- Find a care home in your local area (build on existing links if you have them). If you can, contact them and let them know that you are planning a short blessing (e.g. 10 minutes) to express our solidarity and appreciation for social care workers during COVID-19 crisis.
- Listen to their needs and see if there is anything practical you may need to consider or things the wider community could be doing to support their staff or residents.
 - *N.B. Do not enter the care home property unless explicitly invited to do so in advance (and don't block the entrance - the pavement outside is probably safer). Make sure your plans are compliant with social distancing and the latest COVID-19 regulations that apply in your area.*
- Prepare a simple prayer or liturgy which can be used:
 - [You may wish to adapt this draft Order of Service, developed by Rev Dr Jeremy Brooks, Team Rector of the Beaconsfield Area Ministry in the Diocese of Oxford.](#)

- [You may wish to adapt this liturgy from Fr Jesse Smith, Vicar of Vicar of Caerau with Ely in the Diocese of Llandaff.](#)
- Organise turnout (most likely a small number of people from your parish and/or local community organisations) and prepare a simple act to demonstrate solidarity and appreciation for the care workers. For example:
 - A socially distanced round of applause for care workers
 - Display a banner with a supportive message
 - Draw a rainbow in chalk on the pavement outside
 - Deliver cakes or flowers for staff
 - Present the manager with seeds/potted plant to represent the unseen work of carers and our hopes for the fruits that will be bourn from that work
 - Deliver thank you cards for staff – you could ask for the 1st names of the care workers and have individual cards made by people in your congregation
- Get photos and videos of the action. Share them on social media and with your Citizens UK Community Organiser.
 - Use the hashtags: [#LivingWage4KeyWorkers](#) and [#LeedsActs4Carers](#)
 - Tag [@LeedsCitizens](#), [@LivingWageUK](#) and [@CitizensUK](#) in your posts on Facebook and Twitter so we can share them
 - Tag your MP and local councillors to ask for their support.

3. What should we do afterwards?

- Send a press release to the Yorkshire Evening Post and other local media to raise awareness of the blessing.
 - Speak to your Citizens UK Community Organiser, who has some guidance and templates you should use
- Share news of the blessing to your congregation and invite them to take further action to build support for the Living Wage for social care workers:
 - Prepare an article for your parish website or newsletter
 - [Share our petition with the congregation to sign](#)
 - Invite the congregation to join our Care Conversation on Zoom and Facebook Live at 6:45pm every Thursday. Share this link for people to register: <https://cuk.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYsf-6srzMpGdNCvYOyCTT8jyDoMAucKS0T>
 - Display one of our thank you posters on the church notice board and ask the congregation to download and display posters in their windows. We also have colouring in sheets for children:
 - [Thank you! / Real Living Wage for Key Workers](#)
 - [Care Workers Deserve Proper Pay, Protection & Equality with NHS](#)
 - [Care Workers Deserve a Real Living Wage](#)
- Strengthen your parish's relationship with the care home by taking further action. Consider:
 - Inviting your congregation to "twin" with the care home and plan further activities to meet the needs of their residents or workers.
 - Asking local businesses to deliver treats and gifts to staff.

For more information contact

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**Make sure your actions are compliant with social distancing and the latest COVID-19 regulations.
 Get in touch if you need any advice or guidance**