

**Firefighters' Memorial Day
4th May 2024**



Firefighters' Memorial Day 4th May, with a minute of silence at 12 noon

Message from Fiona Usher, Service Chaplain with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS). Fiona writes:

"They ran towards danger, to help others run away"

I am working with Martin, a firefighter, to raise awareness of Firefighters' Memorial Day on Saturday 4th May - a day to remember the risks, service and sacrifice that firefighters face as part of their daily work. It will be marked by a minute of silence at 12 noon.

As Service Chaplain with TWFRS I am honoured to serve our local firefighters who, at times, will literally be putting their lives on the line to serve and protect all within our local communities. Each year I see how firefighters (if not out on a Call) stand at the front of their stations to observe a minute of silence to remember and pay tribute to firefighters who have lost their lives whilst protecting and keeping us safe.



Often they stand alone - people pass by but rarely stop or stand alongside them to mark this occasion or to show gratitude for their service in our communities. This year it would be really lovely if a few members of your church or faith community could join them by standing alongside them for the minute of silence. And maybe following that by just thanking them for their service - maybe with a packet of biscuits or some cake!

I am sure that this small act of thanks and respect for the dangers they frequently face would be really appreciated. It would also be great way to further build and strengthen relationships between the Fire Service and the religious/faith organisations within the local communities we all serve and I am sure it would be a blessing for all.

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Martin writes,

"May 4th is a day where all firefighters come together and remember the 2,525 men and women that have given their lives in the UK. Sadly, May 4th isn't that well known with the general public and often firefighters stand on the forecourt of the station, on parade - in remembrance alone. Standing alone isn't something firefighters particularly pay much attention to, if at all. It's just seen as the norm by crews. But wouldn't it be fantastic if one or two people from the community stood alongside the crews, and for that to be the new norm in our local communities. As a serving firefighter I know crews would be so grateful and feel so appreciated. Seeing people from the local Church, Synagogue, Mosque or Temple etc would lift the spirits of crews and who knows, potentially encourage a firefighter to reach out to someone for help if they needed it - whether that is a spiritual need or just to talk to someone because sometimes the "I'm okay" that many emergency workers use to hide when they are struggling often means that these needs go unnoticed".

Could you and others known to you pop along to your local fire station and stand alongside the fire crews for a minute of silence at 12 noon?

NB: If they have been called to an incident and there is no one at the station could you mark the minute of silence on their behalf - remembering them and their families in your thoughts or prayers.

If you have time to drop me an email I will forward your details onto the relevant station. If you are able to take a photo (with permissions) and send it to me I'd love to share it with the Communications Team.

I look forward to hearing from you and if you would like to discuss this further just get in touch at fiona-nim@btconnect.com or 07850937236.

Below is a YouTube link to a great 1.43 minute video describing Firefighters' Memorial Day to give you a little background to the day.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fGwuCbpiTw>

Interested in Chaplaincy?

If you, or someone you know, is interested in learning more about developing a chaplaincy role with your own local fire station or ambulance station (or another chaplaincy context) please don't hesitate to contact me for an informal conversation.

Fiona Usher: Principal Chaplain, TWFRS & Chaplain Team Leader Northumbrian Industrial Mission.

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