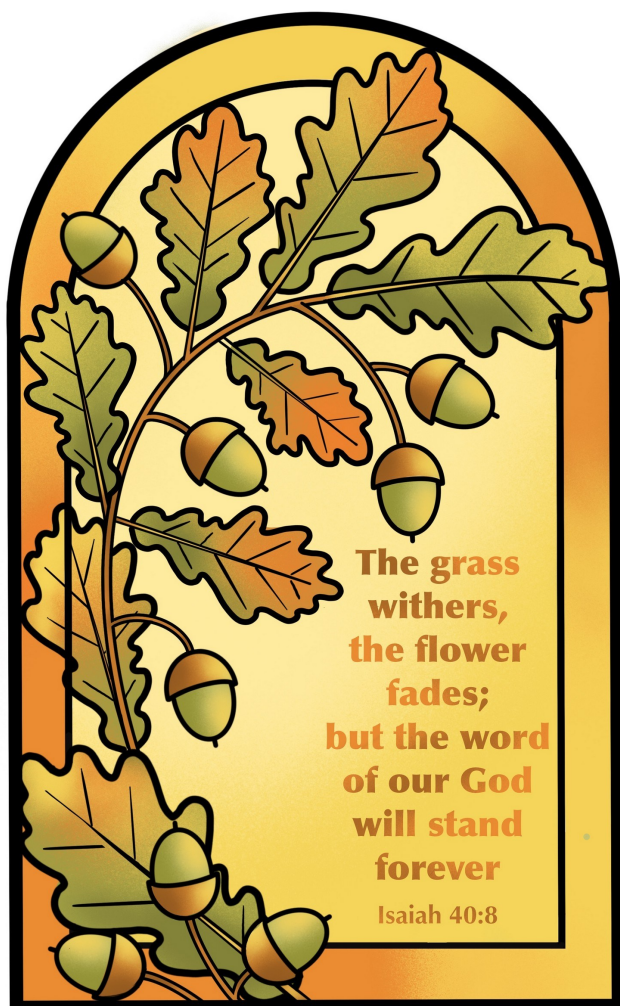

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

News from Whittle & Clayton Brook

PARISH GAZETTE

Please accept this
FREE copy
donations welcome
**OCTOBER
2025**

Speak out, Reach out, Gather in for Christ



VICAR

Rev Philip Venables
St John's Vicarage
Preston Road
Whittle le Woods
Chorley PR6 7PS
Tel: 01257 515141
(day off Friday)

CHURCHWARDENS

Bryn Williams
Gill Menhennet

READERS

Kathy Bigio
Gill Lancaster

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Carol Wright 07522 985363
safeguarding.stjohnswlw@outlook.com

WEBSITE:

www.stjohnsandclaytonbrook.uk



Dear Friends

For a while now people have been commenting on a ‘quiet revival’ in this country. Young adults are finding their way into church. One minister I know a bit, vicar of a large church near Manchester, has described how a significant number of young people are making their way into his services, from where he knows not. Many of them have started reading the Bible, praying and asking big questions about life, God and the world . . . and that is before they have even entered a church, he said. It may be too early to claim a revival, but if something like that is happening, praise God!

The other side of the Atlantic there has been an interesting response to the murder of Charlie Kirk. When asked not long ago what he would like his legacy to be (perhaps a sad question to ask of someone barely turned 30), he replied that he would like to be remembered as a faithful Christian. Whatever you think of his views is not really the point. For myself, I think that he was spot on with many issues and quite offside with others. But it is striking that that is how he wanted to be seen. And since his death, social media in America has been awash with young people saying, ‘I need to go to church’, ‘I need to find God’, and similar. Is God doing a new thing there?

We haven’t experienced that here, but we do have new people coming into our services fairly regularly, and especially at this time of year. And that makes me ask, what will they find when they come? And what, if anything, will keep them? I think of Paul asking the Corinthians, ‘If outsiders or unbelievers come into your meetings, what will they think?’ An emotional reaction to a tragic murder may bring people in, but will it keep them? Surely, only finding the gospel will keep them.

So, as all sorts of different people come into our buildings for different reasons, let’s pray that they meet the Lord Jesus Christ and that they are held and kept by the gospel. Let’s pray that the message that is preached gets through. Let’s pray that God removes the blindness that covers so many. Let’s pray that the quality of our shared lives is attractive and winsome. Remember our verse for 2025: ‘I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth’, and pray for that growth and renewal to come.

Your brother in Christ

Philip

Operation Christmas Child 2025



IT'S TIME FOR OUR SHOEBOX APPEAL !

Since 1990, more than 124 million boys and girls in over 150 countries have experienced God's love through the power of simple shoebox gifts from Operation Christmas Child.

A small shoebox can have a big impact on a child, who may never have received a gift before. Be a part of changing children's lives all over the world in Jesus' name through the power of a simple shoebox gift with Operation Christmas Child.

Each year, our two churches support this charity and have donated 100's of boxes to this worthy cause. With your help we are aiming to donate more boxes this year! Look out for the preprinted shoeboxes (50p) in church in October, or decorate and fill your own empty shoebox.

What goes into the box is fun to pack!

Decide whether you want to pack a box for a boy or a girl, and for which age group (2-4, 5-9 or 10-14 years) and remember to tick or stick a label on the outside of the box indicating your choice. Please include a £5 donation for postage inside the box or pay online at the link below and place the bar code slip in the box. A photo of your family and/or a Christmas card are also nice additions. Then return the box to church by

Sunday 16th November 2025.

For ideas about what to put in a shoebox (and labels) **pick up a leaflet** in church or visit: <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/what-goes-in-my-shoebox/>

Please do not include: Toothpaste, sweets, lotions and liquids; used or damaged items; war-related items (e.g. toy guns, model soldiers, military vehicles etc.); seeds, gum, chocolate or food items; religious or political literature; medicines, aerosol cans, knives, sharp or fragile items. Items packed from this list will be removed from the shoeboxes.

If you can't get to church to collect a pre-printed box or return one, then please either ask a friend who attends church to help you, or let one of us know in person or by email.

If you choose to build a shoebox on line (£25) then please let Gill L or Kathy know so that it can be included in our grand total.

Contacts: Gill Lancaster at St Johns or Kathy Bigio at Clayton Brook



DEADLINE FOR RETURN OF SHOEBOXES TO CHURCH IS

SUNDAY 16th NOVEMBER



Thank you message from Carol

James and I would like to thank everyone so much for their prayers, kind thought and wishes, cards and flowers that we have received since Lyndon's untimely death. It has been an extremely difficult time for me recovering from my injuries and dealing with funeral arrangements at the same time. I have been overwhelmed with people's kindness, offers of food and offers of help, and visits from church family and friends that have kept me going. You've all been very kind.

We are very grateful to everyone who came to the funeral to celebrate Lyndon's life. I find it so amazing to see how his life impacted so many people. I know Lyndon would not have believed how much people loved and appreciated him and would have felt so humbled. Thank you for showing us this through your messages and kind words in the Gazette. It lifts me up whenever I read them.

Many thanks to those who have given donations in memory of Lyndon. They have been given to Prostate Cancer UK and St John's church.

Thank you all once again.
Carol

Warm Welcome at Clayton Brook

Refreshments, Light Lunch and Dessert

Every Monday 11 - 2pm
(sadly we're not open on Bank Holidays)

Donations welcome
Everyone is welcome, children and babies too.
Contact Gill Wright
or just turn up



**Beehive Mother and Toddler group meet
on Monday mornings at 10.45 to 12.15
in Whittle le Woods Village Hall
Play, chat, stories, singing
There's room for everyone
See Christine Whiteside**

Some parents aren't sure quite what to feel about Hallowe'en

– is it just harmless fun, or are there aspects of it that don't fit in with how we want to see the world?

A child's christening service is very honest about the reality of good and evil, and Hallowe'en can be a good time to talk about those things and how the love of Jesus can be a 'Light in the darkness'

Carve a pumpkin. Did you know that gargoyles (the scary looking faces carved in stone on churches) were originally made in medieval times to scare away evil spirits? The pumpkins with scary faces carved into them at Hallowe'en are a bit like that.

Christians believe that you can't fight evil with evil – you can only fight evil with good, and that good will always win in the end. So why not see if you can carve a friendly looking pumpkin this year, as a sign that you and your family are going to be a force for good this Hallowe'en? (And you can always use the offcuts from your pumpkin to make delicious soup!)

You can do the same with Hallowe'en costumes. Superheroes make a great, positive alternative to scary witches and ghosts.

Give a treat. Not everyone is comfortable with the idea of children going round to neighbours' and just asking for treats. But if you don't want them to miss out on something their friends are doing, why not have a family baking session, and take a tray of cookies with you if you go out with them? Even little children can help stick a smiley face on an iced biscuit. That way, you have something lovely to give away to your neighbours, too!

Say a goodnight prayer. Even if you've steered clear of scary costumes, and even if your child has loved the evening, it can be reassuring to have a goodnight prayer that reminds them that love, and light, and good, are always going to be stronger than fear and evil: *'Be with us, Lord, and take away all fear, may your angels protect us and give us peace. And bless us always. Amen.'* You can use these lovely prayers any time when you need a reminder that God is with you – especially at the end of a difficult day, or when something sad has happened, or when your family is worried about something.

Article taken from www.churchofenglandchristenings.org with permission.

EMERGENCY PRAYER CHAIN

The prayer chain has now moved to WhatsApp. It is always available for anyone who would like urgent, emergency prayer for themselves or their family or friends.

If you know someone who is a member of the prayer chain,
please ask them to put in your prayer request.

Or telephone Gill Wright or Cath Orr

Our prayer chain takes many calls. Do not be anxious, concerned or troubled.....

'The Lord is near to all who call on Him' (Psalm 145v18)'

Cast all your anxiety onto Him, because He cares for you' (1Peter 5v7)

Our very dear praying friends,

Glory to God!

We are now on the other side of our Cooper Celebration Tour and back in Chile with our family. Our hearts are overflowing with wonder at how God's grace kept us on the roads



(with Google's help), in the many homes opened to us, sharing in love with friends from over 50 years, in the pulpits, in churches and conferences, over the whole tour! Thanks to every one of you for your warm, Christian welcome, love, hospitality, encouragement, friendship shared in the gospel over the tour months May, June and July. Hilary and I calculated that we visited 15 churches and events and slept in 22 beds (including visits to dear friends and family)! We will never forget the honourable goodbyes you gave us, the telling gifts (a painting at St Giles, Northampton, a book at All Saints' Sidmouth, and others) despite our protests relating to weighty return luggage!

And, of course, we were blessed by the most powerful send-off at the Summer Gathering, accompanied by our dear friends Judy and Paul Cooper of untold years of support. CMS's new CEO, Andy Roberts, anointed us with oil and sent us (with several others who had "finished the course") off into the next chapter of our lives. It was an unforgettable moment for us, as we thanked all the staff at CMS, particularly Jo Anthony and Paul Tester, our loving and servant-hearted bosses!

The purpose of the Celebration Tour was to share with as many of the churches as possible who have supported us from the UK during these 50 years of mission. We were able to say THANK YOU, and propose future support for CMS of other promising mission partners who are nearer the beginning of their work in Latin America (like Marcio Ciechanowicz and Noemi Celeti, with their out-of-the-box "church in the park").

We were very happy to be based in St Andrew's Chorleywood, our home church throughout these years, where Alf served as curate under David Pytches. Our dear friends Jane and Richard Gill and later Nick and Sian Hughes opened their homes and hearts to us while we relaxed, preparing Chilean barbecues and watching Wimbledon, and vicar Tim Horlock lent me his golf clubs for the duration of the tour to play on the Chorleywood Common! That is a friend indeed! Curiously, the BBC searched us out and came to film us at St Andrew's for Songs of Praise, wanting to remember the 33 miners' rescue, and to be shown during November (probably on the 9th, but watch out for it!).

A major surprise came from our precious "adopted family" friends, Beryl and Gordon Whitehead, who live in Northern Ireland. Alf began his residence in Chile in their home in December 1978. It was also in their home that we were engaged and developed our romance! Beryl and Gordon let us know they had arranged a major holiday for us at Rock House, Port Stewart, for five days after our New Wine commitments at Sligo. There we rested, visited the Giant's Causeway, went over the Rope Bridge and enjoyed visiting the Portrush post-British Open course. Hilary, who has been in mission all her life since she went out with the Barratt family (of SEAN fame) at the age of 1, always perceived the Whiteheads to be our "parents and guides" in the work they had started in Las Condes, and which we were able to take on later.

Our visits took us to: St Mary's, Wootton, where we celebrated confirmations and our dear friends Jojo and Peter Ackroyd told us of their own next move; St. John's, Fareham, with SEAN partners Derek and Judy Birmingham, St Andrew's Chorleywood, All Saints', Woodford Wells, where our friends Paul and Becky took us out to a Turkish lunch; the OCMS graduation, All Saints', Bexleyheath, where the friendly vicar, Trevor, hosted us for a traditional English breakfast before the service; St John's, Whittle-le-Woods, All Saints' Sidmouth, St Mary's, Swindon, St. Paul's, Cheam, where the Quiet Revival has lately brought 300 new people joining up; and finally St Giles', Northampton, who gave us a splendid lunch send-off. There is not enough space to tell all but suffice it to say that at each place your love overwhelmed us! Thank you!

Then came Northern Ireland, New Wine, Sligo, two seminars and the Final Night of Glory. On Sunday we spoke at two churches, Dollingstown and Magheralin! We returned to England for the CMS Summer Gathering and from there were taken to Heathrow on 3 August. We spent a loving and hilarious four days in Chicago with our family and then flew to Chile on the 9th

Family and friends were uppermost on our list of love visits: Pancha and Terry Barratt, Duncan and Tasha Cox, David and Patty Dixie, a surprise visit from Grace and Jason Barratt, Charles and Charlie, Mary Pytches, our dear Bishop Colin Bazely, Bob and Mary Hopkins, Julian and Rachel Smith, Brian and Gill Skinner, all culminating in Marcus and Sonia Prior's wedding, where we were able to see our lovely Chilean cousins.

So, we are now back in Chile, fully active in the work here at La Trinidad, but that will be the subject of the next prayer letter.

We greatly value your continued prayers and support until we come to the end of our mission partner service next summer. For those who have supported us regularly, CMS will be in touch with you about the possibility of continuing your support for CMS through another mission partner or partners. If you would like to talk about this, please get in touch on 01865 787407 or hello@churchmissionsociety.org

With our love in the Lord, Alf and Hilary Cooper

PS The only mishap we suffered was losing a pair of black golf trousers somewhere on the tour! Anyone find them? Please give them to Paul Tester, who will be coming to Chile!

Something to Make You Smile (hopefully) and Perhaps Think?

F.

Facts (and Fiction)

"Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored" **Aldous Huxley**

Digging for facts is better than jumping to conclusions. Of the Titan"

In 1898, 14 years before the Titanic's maiden voyage Mogan Robertson published his novel "*Futility for the Wreck of the Titan*", a story about a massive unsinkable ocean liner on its maiden voyage from Liverpool to New York with 2,000 people on board. Whilst attempting to cross the Atlantic in record time it struck an iceberg and sank. Most on board perished simply because of a lack of lifeboats. This is fiction.

On the night of 14 April 1912, the Titanic struck an iceberg and its hull breached rapidly began taking on water. At 2:20am ships time the 882 foot liner plunged to the bottom 13,000 feet below. Of the 2,200 people on board 1,500 died. A lack of lifeboats was blamed for the number of dead. The biggest, fastest and grandest ship in the world went to the bottom. This really happened.

Failure

Failure is a temporary detour, not a dead end street.

"I cannot give you the formula for success but I can give you the formula for failure, which is: try to please everybody". **Herbert Swope**

Faith

It is impossible for faith to overdraw its account in the bank of heaven.

Feed your faith and your doubts will starve to death.

"Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where man's power ends." **George Muller**

Things looked bleak at breakfast for the children at George Muller's orphanage at Ashley Down in Bristol, when there was no food. A small girl whose father was a friend of George Muller was visiting the home and asked George what he was going to do. He took her hand and said "Come and see what our Father will do". In the dining room long tables were set with empty plates and empty mugs. Not only was there no food there was no money left to pay for some. George prayed "Dear Father, we thank Thee for what you are going to give us to eat"

Immediately, they heard a knock at the door and when they opened it there stood the local baker. "Mr Muller" he said "I couldn't sleep last night. Somehow I knew that you had no bread for your breakfasts, so I got up at two o'clock and baked fresh bread for you. Here it is". George thanked him and gave God the praise. Soon after there was a second knock at the door. It was the milkman whose cart had broken down in front of the orphanage and he said that he would give the milk to the children so that he could empty his cart and repair it. *Note. If you want to learn more about all the miracles that God worked for George Muller just look him up and read about him.*

Faithfulness

"For the truly faithful, no miracle is necessary. For those who doubt, no miracle is sufficient" **Nancy Gibbs.**

A man goes into a shop with a framed photograph of his girlfriend and asked for another copy of the photo. The assistant removed the picture from its frame noticing the inscription on the back.

"My dearest Tom, I love you with all my heart. I love you more and more each day. I will love you for ever and ever. I am truly yours for all eternity. Everlasting love Diane. PS: If we ever break up I want this picture back."

Fear

Don't fear tomorrow, God is already there.

Fire

A fire started on some grassland on a farm in Indiana and the local fire service was called out from the local town, but the fire proved to difficult for the service to handle. Someone then suggested that a rural volunteer fire department be called, though they doubted that they could be of any assistance. The volunteer fire department arrived in a dilapidated old fire truck, driving straight toward the fire and stopping in the middle of the flames. The volunteer firemen jumped off the truck and began to frantically spray water in all directions. Soon they had snuffed out the centre of the fire creating a fire break into more controllable parts.

The farmer was so impressed with the volunteers and so grateful that his farm had been save he presented the volunteer fire department with a cheque for \$5,000. A local reporter asked the chief of the volunteer fire department what they planned to do with the funds. "Well, the first thing is that we are going to get the brakes fixed on that old fire truck!"

Fishing

A man went fishing on a frozen lake, cut a hole in the ice, dropped his line into the hole and sat down Hours later he was still sat there and hadn't caught a thing. After some time a boy came along, cut his hole, dropped in his line and sat down. Within minutes he had caught a fish. The boy baited his line again, and within minutes caught another fish. The man was astonished and a bit annoyed, so he went upto the boy and asked him his secret.

"Roo raf roo reep ra rums rram" replied the boy. "What was that?" said the man. "Roo raf roo reep ra rums rram" answered the boy. The man, getting increasingly frustrated said "Look I can't understand a word you're saying" The boy spat into his hand and said "You have to keep the worms warm!"

The Jesus said to them "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" **Matthew 4:19**

"If fishing is interfering with your business, give up your business" **Alfred Miller**

Wanted: Good man who can cook, clean, fish and has motor boat. Send photo of motor boat.

People and fish are alike. They get into trouble when they open their mouths.

Folly

"The wise look ahead to see what is coming but fools deceive themselves". **Proverbs 14:8**

"It is better to be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt" **Mark Twain**

Forgiveness

"Human societies could not exist without forgiveness and public acts of contrition that make reconciliation possible. **Hannah Arendt.**

"An gram of apology is worth a kilo of loneliness" **Joseph Joubert**

"You have cast all my sins behind Your back. **Isaiah 38:17**

Freedom

The Truth shall set you free. **Jesus**

Friendship

"You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can make in two years by trying to get other people interested in you" **Dale Carnegie**

Future

Our future lies not in our own hands but in the Grace of God. **Francois Fenelon**

Don't worry about the future – worry quenches the work of God within you. The future belongs to God. He is in charge of all things

From David Barlow

With thanks to J. John and Mark Stibbe Monarch Press



Please continue to pray for the re-ordering of St John's church.



Almighty God, we thank you for this church building, a place where your people have gathered for worship, fellowship and service.

We ask for your blessing on the restoration which will take place here.

May your Holy Spirit work through this project to create a space that is holy, welcoming and a beacon of your love to all who enter.

May the lives of people who live in our community be transformed through God's work within the walls of our renewed church.



May our congregation work together in faith to love and support the vision for the renewal of our church building



with the family of God

The Suffering Church - Being a Christian *From David Barlow*

We are generally able to better understand the challenges people face for their faith in Jesus through the eyes of individuals who are themselves challenged daily because of following Him. Here are a few stories of such sisters and brothers. As we put ourselves in their shoes we can remain thankful for the peace and stability that we enjoy.

Mariam is a Christian in a country in Egypt, one of the more tolerant Middle Eastern countries towards Christians.

"My heart was torn apart" says Mariam, after Muslim extremists killed her husband – simply for being kind to his Christian brothers and sisters.

Mariam recalls "The area in which he worked was known for intense persecution – Christians suffering a lot because of their faith and discriminated against daily. However, my husband never felt afraid and used to help

other Christians and donate to sick and needy people. That's why radical Muslims wanted to get rid of him and they used to threaten him all the time, wanting him to stop helping Christians in the area. My husband was a brave man and continued helping those in need".

Tragically the extremists' threats weren't merely words and in 2017 they murdered him at work, leaving behind four bereaved young daughters, who are still missing him and in need of his love and advice. "They killed my partner and my soulmate" remembers Mariam now. Not surprisingly Mariam had questions for God. "Why did He do this? Why did God forsake us?" asked Mariam. Given all this family has experienced and seen lament is a crucial part of their Christian walk. With the help of Open Doors local partners, who listened to her story, acknowledged her pain and gave both spiritual and practical support to the family, the family saw God in a whole new way.

"I've seen God's practical love through the love of those who helped the family, through their love, care and patience. I believe and know that God is my Heavenly Father and that He has never forsaken us. We stopped blaming God and started worshipping Him again" says Mariam now.

Mariam is now able to pray **"Father God, thank you for showing me mercy and protecting our small family. I believe that You have the power to change bad circumstances to better ones. Through every challenge I face I ask that You free me from worry and fear, hold me close to You and bring me peace. In Jesus' name, Amen"**.

Sergio and Marcos are local missionaries in Mexico

Sergio was praying with a small group when they heard motorbikes outside revving their engines very loudly. "I thought about getting up and going to see what was happening when I felt God telling me not to go out, so I remained indoors praying". Hours later Sergio's neighbour called him and said that she had seen two men pointing guns at the door as they waited for him to come out. They left when no one answered. In northern and central parts of Mexico, missionaries like Sergio are deemed a threat and an obstacle to drug cartels as they often reach out to protect children, the very people the cartels see as potential customers or gang members.

Marcos, another missionary in an area largely controlled by the cartels recalls that at the beginning of the year he repeatedly saw luxury vans with dark tinted windows (popular with cartel members), driving around his church while he was teaching the children and young people he works with. Marcos says "This is a problem for us as missionaries, because we must plan strategies that allow us to fulfil the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19 - 20) and at the same time take care of our family and ourselves".

Saying grace before eating food in a restaurant, or other public expressions of faith, can be dangerous for Christians living in areas where drug cartels are prominent because it draws attention to those whose lives and ministry is seen as a challenge to the cartels making the brave servants targets for the cartels.

Sergio and Marcos pray **"Heavenly Father, help us to continue to follow Your Word and not lose hope, that our hearts would remain strong and that Your church will grow. Help us not to falter in serving You Lord, if it is necessary that we suffer persecution to tell people around us about the Kingdom of God"**.

Rumana is in her early teens, living in Bangladesh

At school Rumana is alone. "I don't have any friends because I am a Christian" she says. Even her

teachers tell the other students not to speak to her, to be her friend. One day after being pushed down the stairs at school she went to her teacher for help but he didn't listen to her and refused to do anything.

Rumana has been mocked and attacked by children whilst walking to church and neighbours regularly verbally abuse her even shouting death threats. The worst moment was when she returned from school to find her house on fire. She remembers seeing her father kneeling on the ground crying and she was crying too.

Despite everything Rumana and her family, all from a Muslim background, continue to follow Jesus because as Rumana says "Jesus loves me and it is only because of Jesus' love that I have survived until now, despite all the persecution. No one from our village offered any help, all of them just stood watching" When Rumana's father collapsed a neighbour refused to let him rest in his home for fear of reprisal by their community and a cousin refused to take her father to hospital. In spite of this lack of support Rumana and her family remain faithful to Jesus and His call on their lives.

Rumana prays every day **"Father God I pray for my classmates, at all times I pray for them"**.

Mariam, Sergio, Marcos and Rumana live lives very different from us, facing challenges we will probably never experience. The thing that binds them together is their faith in and love of Jesus who encourages them to live their lives for Him. Our lives might be different but it's the same Jesus who wants us to live our lives for Him. In much easier circumstances are we prepared to do that?

Pray for all these people who follow Jesus in spite of all the challenges, knowing that Jesus is the Truth, the Life and the Way.

Jesus' followers in these countries remain faithful to Him in all circumstances and are helped in so many ways by the three organisations that our church supports, Barnabas Fund, Open Doors and Tearfund. We too can support them, contacting them on their websites www.opendoorsuk.org, www.tearfund.org or www.barnabasfund.org. Your donations will make a real difference to lives of Christians across the world, sometime the difference between life and death.

Please remember the LOVE FUND

The Love Fund consists of donations of money from members of both our churches. This can be used for anyone in our church or parish who is in need of help. If you are in financial need for whatever purpose:

shopping, bills, essentials etc then get in touch with Philip and he will be happy to help you. tel: 01257 515141

email: info@stjohnsandclaytonbrook.uk



Proverbs 22:9 The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

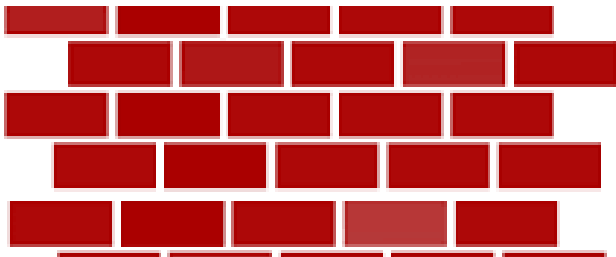
Living Waters food bank is low on everything at the moment. There is a food collection box in Clayton Brook church and in St John's. If you are in Chorley you can drop off donations at Living Waters church in Bolton Street, Tues and Fridays 10-12noon.

Or give a money donation on their website: www.facebook.com/LWStorehouse, And most supermarkets have food bank trolleys.

Words the Lord Jesus Himself said:

"It is more blessed to give than to receive" Acts 20v35

There is a living God. He has spoken in the Bible. He means what He says and will do all He has promised. – J Hudson Taylor



**Be united with other Christians.
A wall with loose bricks is not good.
The bricks must be cemented
together—Corrie ten Boom**

There is no better proof of friendship than to help our friends with their burdens. – Augustine

ALEX and KATE in ASIA

Dear Family in Christ

Family Life. We have been going through a hot summer in Korea! It's very humid and hot, and even our friends from South Asia and Africa say it's hot here, which is somewhat surprising to us. This summer, Euan has been off from school for three weeks and Hana and Rowan were off from preschool for a week (Korea has unusually short break for preschool, and for construction issues, Euan's school will long winter break and short summer break this year). Kate took them away twice for overnight trips with other families at church, and they also went on an overnight trip with Kate's dad. Other than these trips, our summer has been relatively "normal". We saved our big summer holiday till now – Alex, Euan, Hana, and Rowan are now on their way to the UK to see Alex's parents! They will be there for almost three weeks, whilst Kate stays with Yuha at home. It is sad that Kate and Yuha cannot go, but Yuha is not allowed to travel abroad since she is going through an adoption process. Kate, however, now has time to catch up with work, studies and people which is also good. Yuha is happy as usual – the fostering agency is now visiting us every other week, and they said Yuha is the first child on the waiting list to be adopted. We are praying for good Christians parents for her.

Church Life. Since our last prayer letter, we now added another couple as deacons at our church! So we now have three elders and five deacons including Alex and I. We are thankful that we can keep growing together as a leadership team. We also have said goodbyes to some of our core members (two families and a few others), which is always hard. However, there will be new people moving to Korea, and we are praying for God to bring people who we can partner with in the gospel. As mentioned in our previous prayer letter, Kate has now started a female student Bible study. They meet every Thursday at a café near two universities, very close to church. She has about six girls (four of them students) who have been coming at various times over the summer, and hopes to invite a few others into the group, including new students who will come in September. Moreover, our church will be sending a mission team out in early October to an orphanage in the Phillipians where they have children who experienced sex trafficking and serious abuse. Kate is leading a team of four (including herself).

Studies. Kate has just finished her June term and is enjoying her one week break before the September term starts! She now has three more terms to go, including September. Alex has finished his second term of the year, and started his third and final term for his MDiv. Alex will be done with his MDiv in November, which will give him more time to focus on ministry!

Prayer Points. Please pray for Yuha in her adoption process. Please pray that she can be adopted by faithful Christian parents Please give thanks for the student bible study that just started. Please pray that we will be able to reach more students for Jesus! Please give thanks for God's sustaining grace for this intense year. Please pray for Alex as he starts his last term, and for Kate as she juggles family, studies and ministry

.....continued on next page

I (Kate) took a course called 'Counselling and Physiology' this summer. It helpfully highlighted the fact that we are embodied beings, made in the image of God in soul and body. One of the papers I had to write was called 'Embodied Practices for Discipleship Paper' where I had to engage my body in a fresh new way in worship. I chose calligraphy, and here is a short excerpt from the paper!

Since I started this calligraphy book a few days ago, I have found it to be a refreshing and helpful practice in my private time of worship in various ways. Most importantly, it allowed me to still my heart and slow down as I listened to God. Since I juggle being a mum, a church worker and a student, my life always feels very hectic and my mind is always rushing from one thing to another. I have been noticing that I often bring the same mentality into my private time of worship. I would sit down to read my Bible and settle for “a quick bite” instead of savoring precious moments with God. Doing calligraphy, however, meant that I had to write every word very slowly which encouraged my mind to meditate on the words of scripture. For example, I had to write a verse from Luke 9:23 one day, which said “And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” As I wrote the verse out, various words stood out to me. The first word was “any man” – I realized his invite was clearly open to anybody! I was once again amazed how open-armed and inviting Jesus is. Then the next part that stood out to me was “deny himself” and “take up his cross daily”. Although they were familiar phrases to me, slowly writing down these words led me to apply these words in my current situation.


I recently have felt quite overwhelmed in helping church people with various issues. Because I am possibly the only person who is fluent in both Korean and English at our international church in Korea (and also the only women's worker), I have been helping foreign (non-Korean) friends with various tasks. This past week, I was helping two people finalize their housing contracts as well as helping with various other requests. I do say no to some requests, and ask people to wait if they do not need urgent help. However, even if I have enough time and energy to help, I sometimes find myself bitter about the fact that these requests never seem to end because the expat community always brings new people in and with them, new tasks. Then, as I wrote these words out, I realized that this may be my cross – serving others when they feel helpless (and are sometimes discriminated against!) in a foreign country because they do not speak the language. To do so, I have to deny myself – most importantly, deny my desire to use my ability, time, resources, and energy only for myself! I remembered once again that following Jesus did not simply mean staring at the cross where Jesus died (although I absolutely need that time to sit by Jesus just like Mary did!). It meant understanding my cross and carrying it each day, for the distance God has set for that day. I also realized it makes perfect sense that this is the way to follow Jesus who denied himself and carried his cross for us.

Then, the very next day, God used these truths I learned through doing the calligraphy of this particular verse immediately. One of our African students told me her father passed away unexpectedly, and that she is unsure how she would make it back home due to her financial difficulties. Hearing this, I recognized that this may be my cross for that day. I informed the elders, asked if she could apply for the hardship fund, and started looking for cheap flight tickets for her. The elders responded positively, and the church decided to subsidize her flight ticket. Since she needed the next day flight ticket to make it to the funeral, I found myself booking the flights at midnight by the time the elders made a decision. Since God reminded me that this is the way to follow him in my context, and that he warmly invites me to do so, I did not find this to be as overwhelming as I did before. Instead, I was glad for the opportunity to deny myself and carry my cross. This was one way that this Calligraphy experience encouraged my ministry to others!

May the Lord bless you as you carry your cross today, whatever that may be. When we meet one day after we finish carrying our crosses, it will indeed be glorious!

Love in Christ,

Alex, Kate, Euan, Hana, Rowan and Yuha



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