



CHRIST CHURCH DOUGLAS-IN-PARBOLD
FEBRUARY 2017
PRAYER NEWSLETTER

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God' 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

The recent tragic loss of a beautiful young life here in Parbold has rocked our community. A card placed on one of the floral tributes by the roadside rightly describes us as a 'community in mourning'.

So how do we pray at such a time as this and how do we support others in our community who are grieving?

There are no easy answers and we can each only do our best by God's grace but Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 1 offer us great hope and wise advice.

First, as we come to pray Paul invites us to bless God and to remember that he knows and that he cares. He is the 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort' v3. Mercy and comfort come ultimately from him, he is the one who is able to do what we cannot do. He is our loving Lord who 'heals the broken-hearted, and binds up their wounds' *Psalm 147:3*, he indeed is the only one ever able to restore a soul *Psalm 23:3*.

Then Paul reminds that it is God 'who comforts us in all our tribulation' v4. There has been a deep sense of heaviness and sadness over our village in these days as we've struggled to make sense of what has happened, how to respond, how to show our love and care. Paul invites us to allow God to comfort us so that we can then help others - we can't give what we haven't got. He encourages us 'to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus' *2 Timothy 2:1*, to cast 'all your care upon him (God), for he cares for you' *1 Peter 5:7*.

These are not preaching words for me or simply Bible texts to trot out, they are an essential reality I have found myself holding tightly onto in these days. To draw upon the grace of God is a daily necessity for me. He alone is able to help us to stand and be comforted ourselves so that he can use us to comfort others. Only as we draw on his grace are we 'able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God' v5.

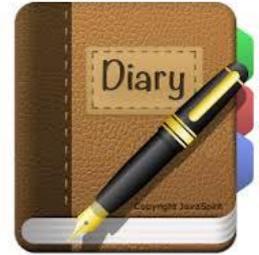
My prayer for myself and our church as we come before God to pray in these painful times is that we will bless him, knowing who is he and what he has done. Then that as we draw our own comfort from him we will be strengthened to be used by him to offer comfort to others in the weeks and months ahead.

As we pray for our community; *'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort'*. Sue.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

The Confirmation Service for our Deanery will be on **Wednesday March 22nd at 7.30pm** here at Christ Church. If anyone is interested in being confirmed, please contact Sue.

'Evening Refresh' – Mon 13th February 8pm A time of reflection and meditation at the Vicarage, 5 Tan House Lane, Parbold; Tea/coffee from 7.30pm. Worship starting at 8.00pm. Everyone welcome.



Monthly Midweek Communion – Thurs 16th February at 10.30am followed by coffee & cakes.

'Morning Refresh' – Mon 27th February at All Saints' Church, Appley Bridge 10.45am – 1pm. 1 hour of worship followed by a bring-and-share lunch.

PARISH TELEPHONE PRAYER CHAIN.

- a) Anyone who has a prayer need can phone his/her request to Brian and Frances McGucken (01257 462058) between 6pm and 6.30pm any day, or for urgent needs, at any time. A team of people is on hand to pray immediately for your need.
- b) If neither is available to take your call live - please do not use the answer phone for this purpose - but contact Lin Milne on 463523 or John Mountain on 463919.

Your prayer request will be treated as confidential – unless you state otherwise.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Please pray the family and friends of Louis Simpson who died in a tragic accident last week. May the Lord be very close and comfort them.
- Please pray for Val Hughes and Bill Hughes who is awaiting an operation.
- for all the elderly and infirm who find travelling difficult in the winter months. And perhaps we can all make sure that no-one is forgotten or lonely.
- Pray for all our links both here and throughout the world – Embrace, Mercy Rescue Trust, Iris Fortaleza, EducAid, The Oaks in Skem, The Message Trust, Tearfund, Parbold Academy and Parbold Scouts and Guides. Give thanks for all the wonderful work they do in so many different areas.



THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

As usual, we send the collection from the Christingle Service, the School Carol Service and the money given in lieu of Christmas cards to the Children's Society. Many thanks to all who gave money – we sent the sum of £422.10 which will be used to help vulnerable children throughout the UK.

THANKS

Thank you to all who sent items for the newsletter, it is great to be able to give more detail about what is happening here and around the world so that we can pray with more confidence. And can I encourage anyone who has a word of encouragement, favourite inspirational poem or book review to share it with everyone via the newsletter. The next Prayer newsletter will be available the first Sunday in April. If you have anything you wish to share, please contact Lin or email stemilne@aol.com by Wednesday 29th March.

Lin Milne

UPDATE FROM EDUCAID - FEBRUARY, 2017



If you are concerned about events, local, national or even international just think of Augustine Bundor, his fellow EducAidians, and all those working with and supporting EducAid.

The EducAidians are struggling every day, in very difficult circumstances, to improve the lot of themselves, fellow EducAidians, and the population of Sierra Leone.

The story of Augustine Bundor illustrates the struggle, and the success that is possible for individuals in Sierra Leone, with personal determination and help from others, including the staff of EducAid, and the congregation at Christ Church, Douglas-in-Parbold.

Augustine was born in a place called Kailahun in the far eastern part of Sierra Leone. Early in his life, his father died. Augustine's mother educated him as far as she could, but this was not very far. Life in Sierra Leone is a constant struggle for families in such a situation.

Augustine left education and 'apprenticed' himself, hoping to become an electrician, but this did not work out. He then 'apprenticed' himself with someone he knew, maybe a member of his extended family, as a welder in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone.

Augustine was working in Freetown as an 'apprentice' welder, and living in an abandoned freezer when he became aware of EducAid. EducAid has a big school, called Lumley, in Freetown. As a student Augustine successfully worked his way through the classes and eventually became a junior member of staff at Rolal School.

After successful experience as a member of staff, teaching other students, Augustine had an external sponsor to continue his studies at University. This sponsorship ceased after two years, but Augustine was making such good progress that EducAid assumed the sponsorship - only possible with the support and donations of friends of EducAid.

Augustine recently graduated as a medical Doctor after eight years study.

What a journey. What dedication and application Augustine must have shown. What help he must have received from EducAid. All made possible by individual effort, help from EducAidians, and support from friends of EducAid.

There - I hope that that has cheered you up !!

Lumley School in Freetown continues its good work and has recently been recorded as the second most successful school in Sierra Leone in the national examinations.

EducAid continues to develop and extend its influence in the education system of Sierra Leone. EducAid staff have recently commenced working with staff from 32 other schools to train the teachers in those schools to teach Integrated Science, Social Studies and Agricultural and Business Studies. All this in addition to the 72 partner primary schools being supported by EducAid Staff.

The organisation of all EducAid schools is being developed to allow all members of staff to have a leading role in the management and organisation of the site. This is intended to improve the efficiency of the sites and to develop the skills of the staff.

Isata Kamara, another EducAid success story, graduates from University on 11th February, and together with Clara, a volunteer from Spain, forms an Equality Team. The Equality Team will visit all the Educaid schools to strengthen interventions to achieve full equality of opportunity, access, and participation in order that every EducAid student is able to maximise their achievement.

Miriam has another Award !!! This time it is from an organisation in New York called 'HeForShe'. The Headquarters in New York have sent her an award for her work in promoting Equality. She is not clear who proposed her or how her work was vetted, but I think that it is a well-deserved award.

As always, I am ready to provide any additional information on the work of EducAid to anyone, in any forum, anywhere !!!

Pat Horn

MERCY RESCUE TRUST

Lots has been happening at Mercy Rescue since I left in December, as I mentioned in my last update Jedidah and the team were holding a Bible Holiday Club for three days, this received a good response from the community and as during the feeding programme there was between 40 and 60 children attending each day. The theme for the week was lost and found based on Luke 15. Please pray that the children who came will continue to reflect on this teaching and that their hearts will be touch by the Love of Jesus. As well as bible teaching there was activities based around the theme, team games, food, lots of laughter and new friendships made.



Tina and Samara the premature babies I mentioned previously are growing and gaining weight steadily and are in good health.

This year so far there have been 5 babies and children rescued one of whom was Una. Una born prematurely had to be re-admitted to hospital due to a virus that also affected some of the other children, she is now back at home please pray for a full recovery.



Please pray for William who has an ulcer on one of his cornea due to the distressing circumstances in which he was found. Baby Danielle is no longer with us, now resting in the arms of Jesus.

These two children (Judith and Daniel) in the space of a week were orphaned, rescued and fostered. Mercy Rescue do not normally take children over the age of two, but having recently been approached by a family who were looking to foster two older children, Jedidah spoke with them and on meeting the children they were delighted to be able to foster them. Yet again tragic circumstances bringing about the need for them to be fostered. Rejected by their extended family and left to fend for themselves. Please pray that they will settle well into their new family.





Jedidah has also asked us to pray for Sharlene and Keagan who are waiting the completion of documentation so that they can join their new forever family in America. The foster family are Kenyan citizens who live and work in America, with extended family in Kitale. Please pray that all the legal documentation is completed soon, and the children have a smooth transition into their new family.

At last planning permission has been granted now work can start of providing accommodation for Eva and her family and also guest accommodation.

Thank you for your continuing support and prayers.

Barbara



NEW WINE WOMEN SPLENDOUR HARROGATE

Empowering women to display his splendour

Date: Sat, 18 Mar 2017

10:00 to 16:30

Venue: Harrogate International Centre

£20.00 if booked before the 28th Feb, £25 after this date.

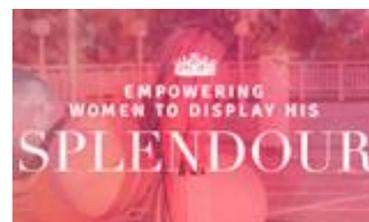
Speakers

Rachel Gardner founder of the Romance Academy, a national youth charity that supports youth leaders and parents in talking with teens about healthy relationships

Nicola Neal Founder and Director of Revelation Life, working with the poorest of the poor in slum communities in Uganda.

Transport to be arranged depending on numbers.

To book or for more information please see Barbara Long.



Many Thanks to everyone who gave so generously to the food bank in the run up to Christmas and a big thank you to those who turned up to help pack and deliver them. This year they were able to distribute 120 parcels to people in need, including presents for the children in the homes to which they were given.

Thank you for your continuing support you really make a difference to so many people's lives.

Barbara

FIRST AIDERS

Volunteers needed to be first aiders at Church, particularly for those helping with the children's groups. There is a one day 'Emergency at Work' First Aid course. The next date available is Sat 18th March, 9-5pm in St Helen's, places are limited. If anyone is interested, please contact Jill Bithell jbithell@btinternet.com.

ALWAYS CHECK THE FINAL HYMN?

(sent by Jonathan Hickling)

This is too funny - but I suspect the minister didn't appreciate it.

A minister was completing a temperance sermon. With great emphasis he said, 'If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

With even greater emphasis he said,

'And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

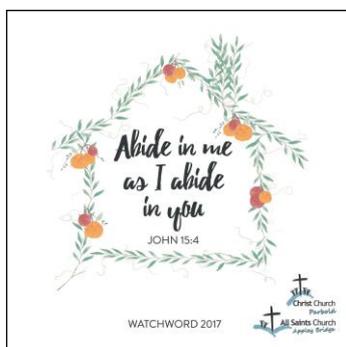
And then finally, shaking his fist in the air, he said,

'And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

Sermon complete, he sat down...

The song leader stood very cautiously and announced with a smile, nearly laughing, 'For our closing song, let us sing Hymn #365,

'Shall We Gather at the River.'



SMALL GROUPS

There are several small groups that meet regularly (weekly, fortnightly or as they can), during the day or in the evenings and on various days of the week. Some meet in homes and others at church. If you would like to try out a group or to know more about what happens at a small group (and they are all different!). Please speak to Sue or Olwen suetimmins@christchurchparbold.co.uk or ohigham@christchurchparbold.co.uk

OUT OF THE MOUTHS.....

The Sunday school teacher was carefully explaining the story of Elijah the Prophet and the false prophets of Baal. She explained how Elijah built the altar, put wood upon it, cut the steer in pieces and laid it upon the altar.

And then Elijah commanded the people of God to fill four barrels of water and pour it over the altar. He had them do this four times.

"Now, said the teacher, "can anyone in the class tell me why the Lord would have Elijah pour water over the steer on the altar?"

A little girl in the back of the room raised her hand with great enthusiasm. "To make the gravy."

