

Dear Friends of The Mission congregation,

Welcome to 2019, I wish you a prosperous and blessed new year. I trust you will find this months prayer newsletter interesting, informative, encouraging and a stimulation for meaningful prayer and intercession.

January means the 'gateway' or 'door' and as we approach the beginning of another year our prayer could be that the same Jesus who promised the church in Philadelphia that he had 'placed before them an open door that no one can shut' would do the same for ourselves during 2019. Revelation 3 v 7. Our 'immerse the Mission in prayer meeting' for January will be held at 11 00 am on Wednesday 09 January.

During the recent break I was inspired about the centrality of prayer, in my own and in the congregations life. I read a book entitled Prayer- experiencing awe and intimacy with God. The author is Tim Keller and in the book he breaks prayer into 5 sections, namely; Desiring, Understanding, Learning, Deepening, and Expressing prayer. It would be wonderful if these characteristics coloured the prayer ministry of the Mission.

Our Mission of the Month will be the Scottish Bible Society. The importance of embracing the Scriptures as our authority and guide was reinforced to me recently when I stumbled across a trend in America. The trend is called progressive Christianity and adopts the view that the Bible can be unreliable, that the problem of evil in the world remains unresolved and affirms the notion that Christians should adapt their morality according to the prevailing culture. As a consequence the Bible is devalued, feelings can replace facts, essential doctrines are open to reinterpretation, historical terms get redefined and the heart of the gospel message shifts from the good news of redemption from the fall to a passion for social justice. The Mission remains passionate about the presupposition that the Scriptures are the inspired and inerrant word of God and are the only rule for life and doctrine and because of this persuasion we are also passionate about social justice.

Snippets;

I was delighted to learn that our good friend Bethany Marsh is making good progress with her teacher training in America and it's likely that she will be able return to Aberdeen to take up the post she has been offered with Friends International in July of this year. If you would like to partner with Bethany and support her in this new role, information sheets are now available from Steven or myself. Please continue to pray for Bethany.

I have been involved with the ACC Homelessness Strategy group for some time and I'm aware that the lack of a night shelter for rough sleepers in Aberdeen has been a major concern for many of us. I am delighted to report that the Assertive Outreach Team from Aberdeen Cyrenians will be working on our streets until 2 00 am. daily until Sunday 31 March to ensure that all rough sleepers are offered temporary accommodation from the ACC housing dept. This should mean that all roofless people are provided with some shelter and sign - posted to further help when and if they require it. This is an answer to prayer!

Our relationship with the Syrian families has been a pleasure, privilege and blessing. We were involved in a strange yet worthwhile experience recently when we received boxes of sweets all the way from Damascus for distribution amongst the families. The boxes took a very circuitous journey going from Syria to Morocco to France to Elgin then to the Mission. It was a joy to see the delight of the Syrians during the distribution event. We continue to pray about the key role we have with the families.

I have worked very closely with Mervyn Thomas the CEO of CSW for very many years, I'm delighted he received the honour of CBE in the new year honours list for his work with CSW. I'm looking forward to being present at his book launch in the Speakers House on Tuesday 08 January. The book is entitled 40 years of Standing up and Speaking out on behalf of the persecuted. It should be an excellent read.

Matters carried over from December that we should continue to pray about;

Once again our Christmas giving tree was very popular with passersby. Please pray that the seeds sown through the message of chocolates and seasonal greetings will touch many hearts.

The Study -Space continues to be very popular and we received many expressions of gratitude from the students. Our food -bank was very busy during the month, please pray for all the conversations we have with the clients as we provide them with food parcels. We always offer prayer to the clients and to my knowledge no one has declined this offer to date. Please pray for the food - bank.

We held a super meeting in the Loudens home during the month to explore rebranding the Mission, upgrading the Upper Hall, renewing the website and enhancing our Praises. I was so humbled and thankful that 29 people turned up to get involved with these important projects and I continue to pray during 2019 we will make significant progress on these fronts. I hope you will join me in prayer and that we will see these developments becoming realities during the year.

Items and dates for our prayers during January;

Tues	08 Jan.	9 30 am	Local pastors and church leaders Prayer and intercession meeting
		7 00 pm	Deacons meeting
Wed	09 Jan	11 00 am	Prayer and coffee meeting to immerse the Mission in prayer for January.
Fri	11 Jan	12 30 pm	SAMS+ lunches resume
Mon	15 Jan	7 00 pm	AUCU students return
Wed	23 Jan	10 30 am	DCP meeting in Credo.
		12 - 6 00 pm	SU prayer Space
		7 00 pm	Prayer and Fellowship meeting, during which we will discuss the way forward for these meetings.

During the month some regular events will begin again including CAMEO, IBS, The students Connect group AUCU Equip, Prayer Breakfasts etc and the Staff working in and out of the Office will return to their desks. Please pray for all these activities.

On Sunday 30 December we held a lovely family service with the theme 'Looking back - Praying it forward'. The service was a relaxed, informal yet very meaningful and memorable occasion. Gordon led appropriate praise, David led prayers of gratitude for the past year and I preached about a prophetic promise from Deuteronomy 8 v 7. 'The Lord your God is bringing you into a good land - a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills'. Then we prayed together that the Holy Spirit, symbolised by water, in the text, would flow into the Mission during 2019 bringing his Washing, Quenching of thirst, Cleansing, Healing, Refreshing, Energising and Renewing to us as we seek his presence, power, priorities and blessings amongst us throughout the year.

With warmest blessings on behalf of the Mission elders,

Hector

You're invited!

Join us every
Sunday at 11am

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