

January 2021

PRAYER DIARY

Mike & Helen Parker
With SIM (Middle East) formerly
MECO



It was rather warmer in May...!

Dear Chadderton friends,

Thank you for being our partners in ministry in the Middle East. Our world, which was due to change anyway, has changed a lot more than we'd expected – as, we know, has yours.

Mike was delighted to hand over leadership of our 'SIM Middle East' team (formerly MECO) to Stephen Judson at the beginning of the year. No sooner had he started to find his way than the threat of disease loomed; and then, with you, we found ourselves grounded and working out what was possible during the rest of the year. Stephen has managed this crisis, leading our Middle East colleagues so well. We've continued as pastoral supporters, of course unable to visit except online; and we're assisting as prayer co-ordinators, while helping to steer some of our group's initiatives in Kurdistan and across Europe.

You'll have seen from our latest update Helen's latest book is published by Instant Apostle. 'Hide & Secret' is set in Cairo and Edinburgh, gives insight into an Asylum-seeker's world, and explores Ruth's dilemma to keep a secret while honouring God and telling truth.

We're enjoying serving a small Episcopal church in South Queensferry, where Mike is Interim Minister. As the town grows, the congregation is eager to engage with the community. After a long spell on Zoom, we've been 'blended' for three months - in person, up to 20, and Zooming at the same time. Sometimes clunky, but 'good enough' we think.

The Scottish Bible Society have been very active. Their 'Bible2020' project went global with people reading scripture out loud, in public if possible, and posting it online. Mike is their 'workplace chaplain' and is very happy to be supporting such strategic work.

Like many of you, we won't be able to see any of our wider family (ours are in Islay and London) in person over Christmas. Helen is part of Friends International's weekly gathering ('Cameo', Come & meet each other) and will make meals for international students, a mix of Arab, Chinese and Indian, who'll be alone while British students head home.

We wonder what the preaching headlines will be this Christmas, what will leap off the page for us? Will it be the census, as authorities tell us what we must do and where we should go?

Will it be the Angels, longing for us to hear the prophets and the gospels, but muted by our attachment to Christmas traditions? Will it be the family who made room for Joseph, Mary and then Jesus, as they were on the move? We think 'God *is* with us' will be the front-runner!

With much love and many thanks to you all,

Mike & Helen

Headlines for the New Year

- Pray wisdom and grace for Stephen Judson, leading our regional colleagues; supporting our team leaders in Egypt, Iraqi Kurdistan, Jordan and Lebanon; and making connections that will lead us to place people in other countries through this coming year.
- *In Kurdistan*, our colleagues have surfed waves of change and at last see new possibilities for ministry. Their focus on Bible translation, distribution and providing resources for local believers to grow in understanding, faith and witness, is matched by their investment in care for local families. Two 'Child Friendly Centres' reach out to children with special needs, encouraging children and equipping their parents. While Covid closures mean this has become dispersed and individual, the ministry continues. We're thankful for one new colleague arrived, and others visiting soon with a view to coming to serve with us.
- *In Europe*, the *howwilltheyhear* network has brought a dozen agencies together to assist local churches reach out to refugees and migrants. Given most people cannot now travel, the focus has moved inside the continent, and we now have an Egyptian colleague bringing new energy into the leadership team - and many new connections with Arab churches and groups in Europe, as well as Arab believers and church leaders among those on the move.
- Some travel has been possible for colleagues in Jordan and Egypt to take much-needed time out to see family and reconnect with supporters and church groups. A number aim to come back in January; pray that will be possible, and especially pray for those who have invested in language study and are exploring where to minister, what to do and who with.
- We have about a dozen people eager to come and join our teams. All of them are stalled; uphold them as they slowly raise financial and prayer support, and as they wait for visas, Covid tests and travel doors to open.

Daily prayers for December:

- 01 Fri Happy New Year: Giving thanks for God's grace and each other we ask for him to reveal himself through his scripture in our hearts this coming year that we will come to know him better and trust him more
- 02 Sat Abelino & Patti that the Lord will continue to bless and sustain his people in Chile
- 03 Sun For all who support us by preaching: that they will continue to open scripture boldly
- 04 Mon Christ Church School: as children return to school for continuing protection for all students and staff
- 05 Tues For God's guidance and discernment about the way forward together for Christ Church & St Mary's parishes and that God would send a new shepherd for his sheep
- 06 Wed Cake & chat: That we are able to keep contact and that no one is feeling lonely or isolated
- 07 Thurs NHS & Care home staff: that they are sustained and supported as they care for our nation
- 08 Fri For our wardens and deputy wardens (Margaret, Dave, Steve & Richard)
- 09 Sat Derek & Audrey Newton: For their health & healing, their wider family and that they can continue to teach and witness to God's grace and mercy.
- 10 Sun Sunday school: For ways to teach and disciple our children whilst apart
- 11 Mon King's Kitchen and the Food Store: that we are able to share God's love and care with those in need in our community
- 12 Tues Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship: that they will remain strong & bold in standing firm for our theological beliefs and supporting evangelical parishes within the Diocese
- 13 Wed The leaders and children involved in our uniform groups; for innovative ways for them meet
- 14 Thurs Crossley Coffee morning: For God to sustain and keep them
- 15 Fri The parish administration team (Cathy & Carol)
- 16 Sat The School for the deaf in Nekempt: for God's continued protection and provision
- 17 Sun Pastoral care: that we look to support the whole church family especially those who are vulnerable at this time
- 18 Mon PCC: for wisdom and discernment of God's will for the way forward for the parish
- 19 Tues Protection for all key workers in our community who carry on working, putting themselves at risk as they do so
- 20 Wed Those who have gone out from our parish to do God's work: Joy & Daniel Ernst, David Wood, Phil Beswick, John & Gillian Statter, Rob & Alison Brewis and Katie Benjamin
- 21 Thurs Parish prayer hour: that the parish will recognise the importance of prayer underpinning everything we do
- 22 Fri The parish finance team (Margaret, Steve B, Phil, Eric, and Dave)
- 23 Sat Mike & Helen Parker: bold and clear Christian witness
- 24 Sun SORTED & all our teenagers and young adults: that leaders will be forthcoming for this work and that ways will be found for them to come together and support each other
- 25 Mon Noah's Ark: For members to keep in contact and support each other and look forward to coming back together when conditions allow
- 26 Tues Wisdom for the medics and researchers looking for vaccines and treatments for COVID
- 27 Wed Tony & Denise in Barrow, Chris & Joy Evans in Gateshead and Dave & Irene Hanson in Preston
- 28 Thurs Home Groups: that they find ways to meet and read scripture together
- 29 Fri Footprints: that all members are safe & supported
- 30 Sat Daniel, Mei, Keziah & Kaelyn: for their new life in the UK
- 31 Sun Oak Hill Theological College and all training for the ministry including Lydia and Vicky

YOUR PERSONAL PRAYER DIARY

REASONS TO GIVE THANKS AND PRAISE

ANSWERS TO PRAYER

NEW PRAYER REQUESTS

ONGOING PRAYER REQUESTS