

April 2025

Dear praying friends,

Thank you so much to those of you who have been praying for our Building Manager who left at new year. She's back in church, with her three children, has repented of much of her inglorious backsliding (with a bit more to go), and is much humbled. The pull of sinful desire and past comforts are strong. But she now wants the right things. Thank you - and please keep praying for her heart.

Here's the world of our church members: a couple of weeks ago there was a cake sale at the local primary school (of which I am a governor). How lovely. Except a fight broke out between two of the mums queueing for cakes. The school hall turned into carnage, and lovingly-baked cakes were knocked to the floor. The reason for the fight? One of them owed a fiver, and repayment was not forthcoming. It was, of course, the talk of the estate for a day or two.

So, I am asking you again to *please pray for a couple of stable families to join us*. None of our primary-aged children in church have married parents now. We need to be able to set a pattern for what's normal, under God. It's wonderful that people have been saved from the chaos and brought into church. But it would be good to have role models of civilised Christian living.

I mentioned 'mute' Adrian* last month. He came to church for five weeks in a row, smiling, moving to the music, loving it all. Since he has some sort of learning disability, I thought it important to visit his home - I wanted his parents (or whoever) to know where he was coming. Turns out, his house is a sort of assisted living arrangement with a few men with learning disabilities and a carer, who was naturally protective, and referred to the 'coffee morning' he'd been coming to. Anyway, since my visit, we haven't seen him since. It's quite upsetting.

This coming Sunday (6th April) we will be baptising youth group member Melissa*. She didn't get baptised with her mum and siblings a year or two ago, because she said she didn't believe. But a huge transformation has taken place in recent months. She has become passionate for Jesus, speaking out boldly in the hostile environment of school, and being a loyal friend to the godly youth. And they are delightfully godly: I'm amazed at how single-minded they are, many of them.

Also, a couple of weeks ago, 9-year-old Eden* dragged her mum to come and talk to me. She wants to be baptised too. The family have only been back to church (after many painful years away) for a short while, but she is adamant she wants to follow Jesus. There are one or two more conversations to have there, but provisionally that can happen on Easter Day.

Joanne*, an older youth, has come to youth group and

church through our own daughter, Zoe. They were friends through high school. She is also talking about baptism, but is concerned about what her family will think. *Please pray that they would come along to church at Easter. We get on well with them, but have not responded to any invitations yet. And - please pray for some boys to be brought to Christ and be baptised too!*

We will have a community outreach event on Good Friday. Such things have been well attended in the past. *Please pray that it will be a good opportunity to get to know people, that it will result in growing relationships, evangelism and salvation.*

I have been asked to give a report on our own family. Thanks for that - and please pray for us.

Lyndsey is doing very well, health-wise. She is being very helpful as a psychotherapist to people with cancer, to Christians in the wider church, and people in various other categories. (psychotherapyforchristians.com)

Reuben is at Warwick University, excitedly busy with evangelism as part of the Christian Union, and getting married to the lovely Susanna in August.

Zoe is at a Catholic sixth-form college that is dominated by Muslims. She is applying for nursing courses.

Leo is in GCSE year, bringing friends to the school Christian Union, enduring the all-important demands of education.

We have a dog, a cat, and all that sort of stuff too.

As for me, as well as leading the church, and teaching a little on the Northwest Gospel Partnership Ministry Training Course, I'm trying to do a little writing on some of the important parts of the Bible that we, in our culture, tend to ignore. I'm not doing quite enough exercise, quite enough reading, quite enough time with people or my family, I'm not battling sin as I ought, and I'm not leading the church as well as I should. My psychotherapist has many helpful things to say.

Anyway, here's a picture of us last summer, plus some girl in pink.

With our love, and many thanks for your support and prayers,

Mark Simpson

