

Roger's Christmas Prayer Letter and Diary 2018

'But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint'. Isaiah 40:31

A very Happy Christmas and New Year to you all as we reach the end of another year. We look back on life's happy and sad times as we approach the wonderful time of Christmas and celebrate 'Emmanuel – God with us' in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. He brings hope into our world once again as we contemplate the complexities of living today. In some ways it is too easy to despair but as Isaiah says 'But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength'. As we look back on this year we can give thanks that we have known the truth of these words, and continue to see 'changed lives' as many come to that living faith in Christ. Thank you once again for your love, support and prayers.

The missions in Hungerford and Bicester have gone well with good numbers responding and most being followed up well. It has been encouraging to hear of lives touched and changed. Both missions were part of ongoing partnerships and we will be returning in March and May respectively next year. Special thanks to David Culhane and Roz Haycock and all the team members who came with us. Mission plans for Eastbourne are developing well as we look to reach out around May time.

Jim Fleming in Ireland is doing well in Seagoe, building a good base for outreach in the community, as well as having opportunities to speak evangelistically. We went to the south of Ireland around Cavan in November to meet church leaders to plan a walk-type mission in 2019.

Locally things have been going well as we welcomed our new minister Rev Andy Machin at Seaford Baptist Church. He is settling in well and it is a pleasure to work alongside him. We have developed an outline plan for outreach across Seaford in 2018, and we are co-leading a 'Lost for Words' faith-sharing course as a preparation for all on the first 6 Sunday evenings in the new year.

We have also developed the work up at the Cabin, a portacabin outreach on an estate called Cradle Hill in Seaford. We have a good team up there running four basic groups. A Coffee Pot for seniors, After Schools Club and Arts and Crafts for junior-aged children, and a Mums and Tots club. It is taking time to establish ourselves and numbers are growing slowly. We have made some refurbishments to the Cabin to make it more usable by removing a partition, putting up shelves for storage, and new heaters will be going in soon. It is beginning to look nice! We ended our Autumn programme of events with a Christmas outreach where over 30 children and 20 adults joined us in carol singing around the streets, followed by some hot food and drinks, a good response to a presentation of the true meaning of Christmas with many taking booklets, and of course Father Christmas! We are expanding some clubs in the New Year and would appreciate your prayers as we seek to establish a Christmas community in this area. The work with Newhaven youth continues to go well.

Jill is doing well and during the last month or so her knee has really improved and she is pain free and walking well. It has taken a year to get back to fitness. She continues to flourish as a Family Worker with Waves with some really difficult situations and is also heading up the Mums and Tots at the Cabin.

The family are good in New Zealand with Andy and Carol, and our grandsons. Thomas is a year+ through his ordination training and still doing well with his essays and Matthew is just finishing school and taking his final exams. Both need our prayers for guidance as to where the Lord is leading them next.

Our family in Canada, our son Chris, Abbi and 3 year old Annabelle are coming over for Christmas so we are really looking forward to seeing them again.

Diary 2018

Please pray for the diary dates below and there are a number of other dates yet to be confirmed at the time of writing.

January

- 7 Lost for Words (LFW), faith-sharing course SEAFORD, 5-7pm
- 9 Leaders' Meeting, SEAFORD Baptist Church, (SBC)
- 14 LFW, SEAFORD
- 15 Cabin Team outreach meeting, SEAFORD
- 18 Daytime meeting of local churches in SEAHAVEN involved in the evangelistic outreach called 'The Turning' in East Sussex and in the evening a mission planning meeting at St Elisabeth, EASTBOURNE.
- 21 LFW SEAFORD,
- 28 LFW SEAFORD
- 30 OASIS group, SEAFORD

February

- 4 LFW SEAFORD
- 11 LFW SEAFORD
- 13 Leaders' meeting, SBC

March

- 9-11 Leading a training and church preparation weekend in the west of Ireland with Jim Fleming as Bishop Ferran invites many church leaders and members of their congregations to prepare for a mission across a large part of Ireland straddling the border. We will have the training on Saturday and will be preaching on Sunday.
- 13 Leaders' meeting SBC
- 24 Pensioner Today!!
- 25- 1 April Holy Week mission with Hungerford Churches with Rev Mike and Ali Saunders, David Culhane and team.