

Letter from Liverpool

December 2020



We hope that you are well and have coped in 2020. It has been a very different year for everyone and for many it has brought sadness that they had not anticipated.

Thankfully, we believe that 'all things work together for good to them that love God,' Rom 8. 28. We must remember that there will be victory in the end, through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15. 57. So as we send you our love and Christmas Greetings can we encourage you to be 'steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,' 1 Cor. 15. 58.

Family News

This has been a year of extreme contrasts. Stephen's mum was called home in March. The Lord was very gracious as she would never have coped with the prolonged lack of visitors and 'Covid' linked restrictions. In contrast, Carole's mum is very content and happy in Faith House, Belfast. Her memory problems have meant that while she has been asking when Carole will visit, she is not conscious of how long it has been since she was there. This is good for her, but not so good for Carole and her siblings.

The contrast was the wedding of our son, Abey to Helen Barton. The date was set, the plans were made and then constantly had to be changed. Some days we wondered if it would happen, but it did and was a wonderful day. All of this took place between two lockdowns and heightening restrictions. We thank the Lord for His goodness.



We have found not seeing Emily, James, Amelia, and Malachi frustrating, but we are so thankful for seeing them via technology. All of this is a salutary reminder of the sacrifices that our missionary friends make as they leave their 'kith and kin' and are not able to see them for long periods of time – what a price they pay to serve the Lord.

Gospel and Bible Teaching

Work in and around the Hall in Huyton has changed dramatically over the last year. All the gospel outreach activities that were based in the hall had to be suspended. Carole has kept up regular contact with individual ladies and meets one of them for a walk each week. We have visited the believers 'to chat' at the end of their pathway / drive to make sure that they are ok. Once, during lockdown, we made up food parcels for families who came to the hall through the Children's Outreach or the Parent & Toddler work. We have just delivered a Christmas Bag to each home containing a craft for the children, a calendar, a Christmas Tract and some 'goodies' for the adults and children. This was arranged by the sisters in the assembly.

Earlier in the year Thomas Sloan and Stephen had planned to have two weeks of Gospel Meetings in Huyton. When lockdown prevented this from happening, they decided to preach each night for two weeks using Facebook Live. Since then, local brothers have given a weekly Bible Talk on Sundays at 4 p.m. on Facebook. As a result, many people have been listening to the gospel each week.

In September, Stephen had two weeks of gospel outreach with the assembly in Wythenshawe, Manchester. It was felt wise not to have meetings in the hall, so a series of 10 gospel talks were pre-recorded. They were advertised through various social media channels. Leaflets were

distributed in the area and posted online so that people could access the talks. A good number watched, and the seed was sown. As you know, recordings are online permanently and so the Lord can still use His word to speak to souls. It encourages us to remember that the Lord says that His word 'shall accomplish that which I purpose and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it,' Isaiah 55. 11.



This year meetings with other assemblies have often been moved from physical meetings to 'Zoom' meetings. While not ideal, there have been times of real blessing in sharing the word of God. Most of us will have learned, this year, that things don't always 'go according to plan'. Our concentrated learning curve started in November last year when Stephen had to cancel a trip to Mexico due to his mother being admitted to hospital. These lessons continued through lockdown as a planned trip to Pakistan had to be rescheduled twice. We now have a travel voucher and wait on the Lord to see when that trip will take place. Thankfully Stephen was able to make a visit to Pakistan in early 2019 when he met Sohail and many of the believers which was a great experience for him.

Carole, Alyson Howard, and some of the sisters in Liverpool made up Christmas parcels in October/November to send to Romania. This has been done for several years now, but they felt that, this year, it was especially good to have a project to help the Lord's people at this difficult time.

Online Bible Teaching & Outreach

Online Bible Studies that Stephen had been involved in before 'Covid' continue. On a Wednesday at 1 o'clock he has his Bible study with Sohail in Pakistan, this is followed on a Thursday with a Bible Study with a couple of believers in China. On Friday a brother from Uganda meets Stephen (online) to study the scriptures. These are all doors that the Lord has opened, and we continue to be amazed at how the Lord is working in the hearts of His people.

The work in Pakistan is a great encouragement to us. There are now 11 assemblies that Sohail and his fellow workers have seen planted. Souls are saved regularly from either a nominal Christian or Hindu background. From time-to-time Muslims are getting saved but this is usually through the work in Prisons. Sohail now works in four prisons and is training a young man, Qaisar (Pronounced 'Kasa'), to work with him in the prison ministry. Please pray for the believers and workers in Pakistan. They have suffered a lot economically and in their health because of 'Covid', but the Lord has preserved most of the saints in these trying times.

Sanya, the brother the Lord brought us into contact with in Uganda, is a teacher. Due to 'Covid' schools are closed in Uganda until the New Year but Sanya has kept himself busy looking for openings to preach the gospel. Four weeks ago, he saw an opportunity for a weekly gospel radio program. Since then, Stephen has been helping him with this radio outreach. We were thrilled to hear of a lady, Apio, professing faith in Christ last week after listening to the program on Wednesday afternoon. Please pray that this door will remain open and that the Lord will bless the preaching of His word. Many of the other gospel outreaches have continued this year such as school work, writing in secular magazines and local bible studies. School work has changed from personal visits to online presentations, but the gospel is still going out. It has been disappointing to stop open air work, but Stephen felt it was wise not to do this at the moment. Other areas of service have developed as there has been great appetite for Bible Teaching & Devotional Videos via YouTube. It has been a blessing to be able to encourage and support our fellow believers through this difficult period.

May the Lord encourage you and strengthen you in the coming year.

Love, Stephen & Carole Baker

