



Flame Trust

- education
- supporting disadvantaged people and the voiceless
- local and worldwide community involvement
- mentoring and social development in a variety of cultures and situations
- tours and events bringing insight and challenge to audiences in the UK and overseas

Dave's Christmas Newsletter December 2024

Dear Prayer Partner

As we fast approach the Christmas season, the lyrics and tunes of carols often come to mind. Attending a Methodist Church Sunday School, it was a carol by George Rowe that became a firm favourite at this time of the year. 'Cradled in a Manger' – written well over a hundred years ago - was very popular: a poem set to music with a haunting melody and



perceptive lyrics, but it was a line in the fourth verse that has stayed with me down through the years and often comes to mind in the Advent season.

Rowe refers to those '**who have Winter, but no Christmas, bringing them no peace on earth**', and again, even without specific reference to what has dominated our screens and airwaves in recent weeks and months, these words serve as an apt description of what will be the experience of those whose lives are ravaged by conflict and war.

Yet of course we also live in a country where hostility, pain, deprivation and hardship are also common, so although we are unable to sit around the table at the United Nations building in New York, at least we can make an honourable contribution in communities where we live, reaching out to those who will experience Winter but who will not experience the love and hope that is at the heart of the Christmas message.

Our responsibility comes sharply into focus.

The Rear View Mirror

As a person who is cautious about frequently dwelling in the past, I also remind myself that it is important to evaluate and appreciate what has been happening in recent days and months.

History teaches us about the joys and sorrows on life's pathway – not that we always learn from previous experience – but thankfulness and gratitude can be such a boost and a blessing. **As I pen this letter to you all, I find myself reflecting on what 2024 has delivered for the Flame family, and being very grateful for encouragement, support and the obvious evidence of God's presence in what He has called us to do.**

The Windscreen

Yet as every driver knows, if you keep your eyes fixed on the rear view mirror, you are likely to crash as you go forward, and it is with a sense of anticipation and excitement we plan and prepare for 2025.

There are numerous objectives in Flame's ministry, **but essentially, we are focussed on extending the message of Christmas into the hearts and lives of those with whom we have established relationships** – whether those be the students in

our schools, the communities in Romania, the children in Portugal, and those whom we encounter in the course of a preaching and teaching ministry. Just as the RSPCA are keen to remind us that pets are not just for Christmas(!), the same is true of the message of Peace and Hope.

This commands our attention as we look through the windscreen.

The Playground in Brusturoasa

I am increasingly encouraged and blessed by what has been achieved in recent years with the construction of four playground facilities in deprived communities in Romania.

Steered by Calin Rezmuves, Flame's Practical Assistant, these projects have enriched the lives of children and parents alike, and have made a profound statement about why we do what we do.

Images of the latest playground continue to arrive and during the informal opening of the latest construction in Brusturoasa, the local Priest/Pastor arrived quite unexpectedly to pray over and bless the new facility – referring to Scripture as he explained to those present that he had been asking God to supply a recreational area in the community. Nothing had



The completed project in Brusturoasa, including the blessing by the local Priest/Pastor

ever existed until Flame took on the challenge.

The Mayor wrote: *'Thanks to your kindness, we have been able to turn a long awaited dream into a wonderful and lasting reality. The newly built playground will offer children a proper space for recreation, development and social interaction, significantly enhancing the quality of life for the entire community'*.

Do visit our website for more pictures (www.flametrust.org) and the Mayor's full response, but a huge

thank you to you and all the Flame family for making this possible with your generous gifts and prayer support.

We shall be putting a small brochure together very soon that gives an insight into the development of the Playground Project, and we shall be arranging a meeting with our partners in Habitat for Humanity who help with the actual construction in the very near future, as we plan for a similar initiative in 2025. Watch this space...

Isma Pinta in Portugal

Many of you will have met Ismael Luzia, a young Pastor who ministered in the church in Madeira. Ismael and his wife



Vania are staff members of a Portuguese Mission organisation and have worked on the animation of Bible stories for children which have been used by the Portuguese National media outlets including TV. Ismael wrote to me just two days ago, to say that he is now well on the way to translating his animations into English, which will enable a much wider coverage and circulation of this resource across Europe and further afar. **Do pray that this will develop and will be well used.**

Academies and Chaplaincies

I had the privilege of attending the recent Remembrance Service at Q3 Langley where I enjoyed the role of Chair of Governors for many years. I was heartened and encouraged to note the respect shown by students and staff on that occasion, and the visit served to underline the importance of supporting those who continue to make sure that Christian values are

represented in our schools and colleges.

Flame is currently evaluating its ministry in this area, as we want to be as effective as we possibly can be, supporting the wider ministry of many chaplains, but also maintaining the Christian ethos where we have immediate influence.

Time Out

Our Autumn Flame Family Conference at Highgate House in Northamptonshire was a real blessing, and greatly appreciated by those who were in attendance.

The facility was excellent and very comfortable, and the ministry of Pastor John Price from Kingsway Church in Wombourne was so appropriate and thoroughly appreciated.

Indeed, if you want to catch up on what he shared, John has now posted his messages on YouTube and you will find the link on the front page of our website in the section titled 'Time Out – September 2024'. These messages were preached at Kingsway Church earlier this year.

BUT we are delighted to announce that by popular demand(!), we are planning



PUERTO POLLENSA

Top left: Pollensa Park and Spa Hotel

Top right: The harbour

Right: tree-line promenade.

Above: Ian and Ruth Coffey

another **Time Out in September 2025 – but in Majorca.**

Full details are on the Flame website, but we have been offered hospitality and facilities at the Pollensa Park and Spa Hotel in Puerto Pollensa: 25th September – 2nd October 2025

The location is really beautiful, and several Christian groups have used this hotel in the past. The weather should also be warm and the resort less crowded, so we are thrilled with this opportunity – not to mention that currently the cost is very reasonable, considering how prices have risen in recent years.

Our guest speakers will be Ian and Ruth Coffey. **Booking opens on 2nd**

December. Please contact either Sharon or Matt at Travel Counsellors on 0121 259 0000 or 07801 207748.



However, as we all know, prices are controlled by the airlines that provide the flights, and they rise as bookings increase, so if you would like to join us for this refreshing break in the sunshine, don't leave it too late to book.

Please note that bookings are NOT being handled by the Flame office, but direct with Travel Counsellors, details as above.

Visit www.flametrust.org for the latest news, event information and details on how to make a donation online

And as I conclude:

And for this, I momentarily glance in my rear view mirror:

Many of you are aware that Maurice, my youngest brother, was taken seriously ill way back in January, and as I write, he is now receiving palliative care in a local Nursing Home. He is quite weak and frail, but is in no pain and is being well looked after. Thank you for your extraordinary prayer support for us as a family on this journey, and do continue to pray that the winter experience of serious illness will not eclipse embracing the hope and certainty of the Christmas message.

I am doing ok. One or two health challenges that come with the 'maturity' territory, but am grateful for the energy that God gives for all that He wants me to do, and have appreciated your notes, texts, calls and other communications.....not to mention your generous gifts and support. My Trustees in Flame are also encouraged with what has been achieved this year, and so we now look through the windscreen, committed to our calling in all that God has given us to do.

May I wish you a very happy and blessed Christmas.

In the interests of economy and stewardship, I shall not be sending out so many Christmas cards this year, but will make a donation to the Playground Project so please accept this newsletter as my Christmas Greeting. I know you will understand and I'm aware many of you are making similar decisions after the recent Post Office hike in postage costs.

And as I conclude, the message of Christmas rings in my ear:

'Emmanuel – God is with us'. May this be the message that transcends your winter season, and brings you real joy, hope and peace, as we give thanks for the Greatest Gift ever given.

God bless, *Dave*

If you would like to support me and my work with Flame, or would like further information about Flame and its activities, please complete the form (right), detach, and return it to the Flame office address below.

You may wish to know that it is also now possible to make donations, via Stewardship, securely online from the Flame Trust website: www.flametrust.org

Flame Trust, PO Box 15, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 1YQ
☎ 01384 232786 ✉ office@flametrust.org www.flametrust.org
Registered charity no: 1134374 Company no: 06778011

RESPONSE FORM

- I would like to financially support the work of Dave Pope on a regular basis. Please send details.
- I would like to adjust my existing giving to further support the work of Flame Trust. Please send me the appropriate forms to complete.
- I enclose a "one-off" gift of £..... to support the ministry of Flame Trust.
- I enclose a gift of £..... to support future **Romania Playground Projects**
- I am interested in **Time Out 2025 in Majorca - please send details**
- Please send me extra **Time Out 2025 in Majorca brochures** * quantity for my friends/church

If you wish to transfer your gift direct to the Flame bank account, the details are as follows (please include your name as a reference):

FLAME TRUST LTD., BARCLAYS BANK
SORT CODE: 20-85-13 ACCOUNT NUMBER: 73536483

- I would like Flame to treat my giving as a Gift Aid donation (*please see declaration, below*).

If sending a cheque, please make payable to Flame Trust and indicate the purpose of your money on the reverse of the cheque.

(You may wish to know that it is also now possible to make donations securely online via the Flame Trust website: www.flametrust.org)

Name and title: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email address: _____

Gift Aid: I confirm that I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and community amateur sports clubs that I donate to will reclaim from my gifts for the current tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax for every £1 that I have given. Please inform us if you have any changes in your address details, want to cancel this declaration or no longer pay sufficient tax.

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Flame Trust, PO Box 15, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 1YQ

☎ 01384 232786 ✉ office@flametrust.org www.flametrust.org
Registered charity no: 1134374 Company no: 06778011



This page is intentionally blank