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**INTERIM NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2020**

Dear Friends and Prayer Partners,

As this month comes to an end, I wanted to drop you a line to hopefully encourage you and to give you some 'up to date' information. These are demanding days for us all...particularly if you fall into the 'mature' category. Having lived a solo lifestyle for many years – by choice I hasten to add - I still enjoy the company of friends and family, and I think the biggest challenge of this time is the social isolation. I am sure many of you have felt the angst of this. However, I have begun to learn some lessons that I should have learned a long time ago. None of us need or want 'loneliness'...it is a trigger for all kinds of problems and health conditions, but 'aleness' is an experience that can be therapeutic and an encouragement for us to get to know God and ourselves a little better, and certainly an opportunity to develop our spiritual awareness. I have done more thinking, praying, meditating, musing, reading, contemplating etc. in these strange days. Of course, getting the balance right is the key, as even too much 'aleness' can provide more challenge than that which is helpful.

Having been a person who has warned people about the over use of social media, I have valued all of the calls, texts and WhatsApp photos and messages in recent days, but when this season of isolation is over, perhaps we shall really appreciate more the opportunity of good friendship and meaningful relationships that add depth and substance into our lives. These are blessings that do not come from a screen and a few buttons.

Now some Flame information:

1. Our **Time Out** break is filling up. To be held at the Redcliffe Hotel in Paignton, October 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> with guest speaker Rev. David Coffey. Please plan to be there and one point to underline...**SHOULD THE HOLIDAY NOT GO AHEAD BECAUSE OF COVID-19, YOUR DEPOSIT WILL BE RETURNED...** Current predictions are that all will be OK in October, so we are planning with optimism and faith and as it is our 20<sup>th</sup> event, it is proving to be popular. Don't forget if you take advantage of the Early Bird Discount there is a saving of £15. Just book before 1<sup>st</sup> May.

Details are available on the website, but a call to the office for a brochure will see it on its way to you. (Although Jackie is working from home, she accesses the answer machine every day and picks up messages).

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2. The holiday to Madeira was amazing. 48 people travelled and enjoyed the hospitality of the VidaMar that was bathed in sunshine and very mild weather for most of the week. David Coffey's ministry was apt and timely, and now, as we find ourselves in very different times, God's Word and words to us are valued. The link up with the local church was effective and we enjoyed fellowship with the Pastors and in particular, Ismael, the Youth Pastor. Ismael allowed us to borrow his piano. We were able to make a generous gift to the church as the membership plans for the future, but I received a text from him two days ago to say that the island has almost 'closed down'. The church has been gathering 'on-line' for two weeks and he asked for prayer as the church goes forward. He also asked for prayer support for his family..(wife and two young daughters) as they are self -schooling at home. He sends his greetings to all members of the group and said how much our visit was an encouragement and blessing to him and to the other leaders.
3. Jackie is researching possibilities for next year but as you can appreciate, with all of the 'lock downs', this is not only proving to be difficult, but also near impossible as the Travel Industry is decimated by Covid -19. As and when, we shall publish our plans and possibilities, but of course, our main ministry and focus is outreach and encouragement, so that has to be our priority.
4. **The Playground Project in Romania** is coming on very well. Thank you so much for all your support. Calin is so blessed and encouraged and although we still need a little more support, this will come in as the build starts. The commencement is delayed of course. Romania is also in 'lockdown' and Calin cannot fly out there on April 9th as originally planned. However, we will keep you updated and again, thank you for all your gifts and expressions of support.
5. **The Chaplaincy Project** is still active and some weeks ago, we met with the CEO of the local Academy network who expressed his appreciation for all that is being achieved. It occurs to me that while schools are 'out' at present...(and who knows for how long?).....this will also provide opportunity for engagement with young folk when they are 'kicking their heels'. Pray for us as we research some possibilities. I continue to be active at Q3 of course.
6. Technology allows us to keep in touch with students and parents and my traditional Easter message will be sent out to ALL families. I am including a copy, attached to this newsletter. It is intended for everyone...those of all Faiths and those of none, and it may be something you can use in your locality. I am sending copies to our local radio stations and local newspapers and may be doing some 'live' deliveries on air. It is written for such a time as this, so please feel free to circulate as widely as you can and do use it in and around your fellowships.
7. Thank you for your prayers and your gifts. Your prayers achieve so much and your practical/financial help is also valued at this time when charities are under real pressure. Our move to the new office which went well has financial implications for us, along with the installations of new IT connectivity and phone line. We have also lost the support that was generated by our management of St. James House. BUT God is a great provider, so please pray that the deficit which is humanly expected as we go forward will be providentially accrued from other sources. THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY EXPERIENCE AND GOD HAS NEVER FAILED ME YET IN ALL OF MY 50 YEARS OF MINISTRY.

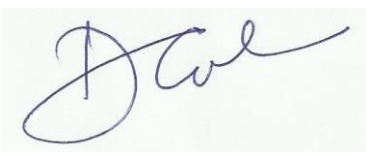
8. As you would expect, there have been some necessary adjustments to my programme. My intended visit to Australia with Philip Yancey, at the invitation of the Leprosy Mission has been postponed until 2021, and other speaking engagements and commitments are on hold for the next few months. I expect that it will take until the late summer for everything to reach some level of normality.
9. On 1<sup>st</sup> March we opened the new office at Zoar Methodist Church, Lower Gornal, and although the transition took a lot of time, all of the necessary technology and communication lines were installed very efficiently and we were able to function immediately. The phone line has not changed, and although Jackie is working from home at present and indeed for the foreseeable future, she is still able to access messages left on the answering machine. Calin is also checking the post and therefore all of our communications are unaffected by the move. For those of you who visit the website, [www.flametrust.org](http://www.flametrust.org) .. we intend to keep that as current as possible and will update it with news and information. You will currently find some photographs of our new base and some images of those who do all the work! Don't forget to visit the prayer fuel area as this is particularly relevant at the present time. One dear friend is currently in intensive care with Covid-19 related illness.
10. **Amazon Smile.** Many of you I am sure use amazon.co.uk to order goods online, and although I am a very keen supporter of local outlets, this resource is often very useful and of course particularly in the current challenge of lockdown. However, Jackie has been able to achieve a link with Amazon whereby when you have registered with them (a very simple process), all of your future online purchases attract a commission for Flame's ministry. It would be great if you were able to sign up for this opportunity.

This is how you do it:

- a) Visit the website: smile.amazon.co.uk
- b) Under 'Find a different charitable organisation' type 'Flame Trust' and press the Search button
- c) Select Flame Trust
- d) Click the button to agree where it mentions 'Yes I understand that .... '
- e) Click 'Start shopping'
- f) Every time you shop on Amazon you will need to access the same 'Smile' website. However for second and subsequent visits, you will not need to go through all these stages

If you have visited the website, you will have noted my comment about those men of Issachar that I have preached about and reflected on many times. Here was a group of people....small in number...who were selected for David's army because...'they understood the times and knew what should be done'. That's what I pray for in our Nation at this time, and at the risk of concluding with a sermon, please join me and ask God for His wisdom to prevail in and around our leadership at ALL levels, and for us to be renewed in our faith and vigour for such times as these.

Wishing you God's peace and blessing and do keep safe and well,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David', is written on a light-colored rectangular background.