



Flame Trust

News & Prayer Update - November 2019

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

- 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

Dear Prayer Partners

Out of the Loft

I am told that as you advance in years, the loft space in your house can become a burden or even an embarrassment. A recent expedition up the loft ladder in my home delivered both sentiments as I realised the immediate need for a declutter as a result of the growing accumulation of possessions that should have been disposed of decades ago. A set of skis that are no longer 'cool', clothes that no longer fit and Christmas lights that defy health and safety regulations – to mention just a small selection of accumulated clutter.

But it has also revealed box files full of documents and old letters – dating back to the early 70's. Handbooks from those early Filey conventions and the first Spring Harvests – not to mention the early documentation relating to Saltmine and even the first slide story explaining the origins, still in place on Kodak Carousel Projectors. Remember those? But hoarding is a mixed blessing. Great reminders of events and history but, if like me, you have a fascination with the past, it can become that burden that needs to be lightened. The skip is on order alongside an industrial capacity shredder. And all of this is rather strange to someone who is actually committed to moving on – doing the 'Carpe Diem' and planning for whatever days God may grant.

I guess the key is 'balance' – holding on to that which is good, right and true, and disposing of unwanted baggage and lightening the load for the days ahead. And I think that is what I was trying to communicate in my last letter. Some partners thought I was suggesting it was time to draw

Visit www.flametrust.org for the latest news and event updates

stumps and others offered messages to encourage the 'keep on keeping on' mentality. What I was trying to convey was the need to refocus for such a time as this, avoiding uncommissioned work, but investing in others and keeping the flag flying for mission and a distinct Christian ethos in community initiatives, education and in wider society. My commitment remains the same. It is just that I am becoming more measured in what I do and the responsibilities entrusted to me. I hope that the following reports and updates support that perspective.

State of the Nation

I will resist commenting on Brexit, but sadly the wider perspective confirms the redundancy of good leadership on the world stage as well as the paucity of integrity and wisdom across all parties in our Nation. The Christian voice has become a whisper in the corridors of power and the influence of the church is as dying embers in the fireplaces that once gave out heat and light. Against this background you can either retreat further into the Christian cocoon or determine to rekindle the fire in the place where you are, or where you have a measure of influence or indeed where people will listen. Now that is my current focus in Flame – alongside bringing encouragement to those who are trying to do the same.

Chaplaincy

The provision and support of chaplains in schools continues to be an integral part of Flame's ministry. Supporting Gerry Denston in his tireless efforts in establishing chaplaincy teams, I have been so blessed and encouraged to see this work blossom and grow. Please pray that our Sixth Form Conference in November will be well attended. It will focus on mental health and will of course have a Christian perspective with guest speakers and various workshops. I shall be speaking on managing stressful situations, so please pray for this event – and in particular for Gerry who is organising the day alongside the Head of Sixth Form in the Invictus Academies.

Indeed I am writing this letter after a formal chaplaincy meeting where we listened to stories of students asking searching questions about the relevance of Christ in today's society and queries about faith. Chaplaincies are a wonderful way of establishing Christian truth in

Visit www.flametrust.org for the latest news and event updates

predominantly secular areas and secular situations and that is primarily why Flame is focusing on this development at this time.

Q3 Academies

I continue in my role in and around Q3, although I have served notice regarding my role on the main Board. I shall focus primarily on Q3 Langley – a growing school which will eventually accommodate 1500 students. I serve as Chair of Governors but have input at other levels.



Please pray for the effectiveness of my Christian assemblies to be delivered 4 times on 13th December. Of course I am involved at other levels, but it is a privilege to serve in this situation alongside our Head of School who is more than supportive of the Christian ethos.

St James' House

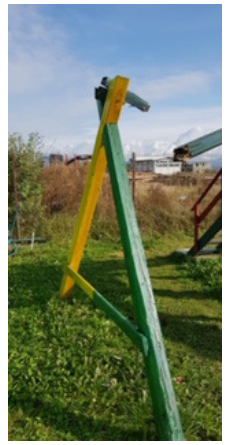
'Tis done, the great transaction's done' – to quote the hymn writer. And now we begin to search for a small office base in the locality. We have to vacate the premises early in the New Year, so please pray that we might find accommodation as soon as possible with some storage facility. It needs to be 'safe and secure from all alarms' to quote another hymn writer, and it also needs to be easily accessible and provide a functional base from where Jackie can work. Do keep your knees bent on our behalf.

New Project in Romania



It was 2 years ago when Calin Rezmuves – practical assistant at Flame – headed up a project in association with the Social Services in Maramures, to raise support for the provision of 16 beds and some bedroom furniture for a home for children with mental disabilities. Through the generosity of the Flame family this home was re-equipped, and Flame highly commended for its support and commitment. Since that time, Calin has been asked to support another home in the same locality that is needing provisions and I visited in early October to assess the situation and look at the potential of developing a new project.

I discovered a facility that looks after 12 children and some young adults – again 'spartan' beds, but also a lack of outdoor provision for therapy and exercise. Flame is therefore launching an appeal to provide 12 new beds, but also the support needed to install a play area with appropriate equipment for rehabilitation / adapted swings / recreational aids and exercise equipment. The Director comes with an excellent track record of working in the situation, and over the next 6 months we are looking to raise approximately £12,000.00 for this cause.



If you can help, you will find more detail online over the next few days, and we are also designing a brochure to highlight the project. Why not make it your Christmas project for your church family? Many churches take up a Christmas offering and give to a worthwhile cause, so this might be appropriate for your fellowship? I can send you some extra detail if so required.

Touring with Philip Yancey

Dr Paul Brand
& Philip Yancey

Fearfully & Wonderfully The Marvel of Bearing God's Image

"This is a stunning, wonderful book by two of my favorite people... This book invites every one of us to marvel at the image of God in every person."
Shane Claiborne



It was good to meet a number of you on the recent 'Fearfully and Wonderfully' tour, sponsored by the Leprosy Mission, and it focused on the remarkable life and ministry of Dr Paul Brand, with endorsement, illustrations and comment from Philip Yancey. Philip and his wife Janet are always a joy to work with, and I am privileged to know them both as good friends and co-workers in Christian ministry. The title of the tour reflects Philip's new book – originally written in conjunction with Dr Brand – but a must read. Thanks to the Leprosy Mission for making it all possible.

Time Out

Another excellent family conference last October in the wonderfully hospitable Redcliffe Hotel in Paignton. Great ministry from Rev Willie Black – formerly serving with OMF – supported by visiting guest speakers. Next year will be the 20th Anniversary of Time Out, not that there is anything significant in a number, but the hotel is booked 12th – 16th October 2020. However, knowing me as you do, you will understand when I say that it is necessary from time to time to re-assess



and re-imagine, so, over these next few months we shall be spending time researching other ways whereby we can bring the Flame family together for refreshment, updating, ministry etc. Now as I said, next year is booked and our Bible reading speaker will be David Coffey, supported by the usual wider team of speakers, but I do welcome any comment or advice that you might have as we plan for future Flame family retreats / events.

Snippets

1. The holiday to Madeira in February is full with a waiting list. The popularity of this late winter break has taken us by surprise, and currently 48 people comprise the party destined for this beautiful island in the Atlantic
2. Wake-up call – A visit to the GP, followed by time with a vascular consultant revealed a blocked vertebral artery in my neck. No surgery can be performed without significant risk so it is a course of appropriate medication, less stress (!), more exercise and other lifestyle adjustment. I am at peace with the diagnosis and have to be realistic that although my E levels are still high (energy and enthusiasm), my PC (physical capabilities) are sometimes challenged. I am told that sleep is often the best therapy but in short supply for the more mature, and it is the over 70's that tune into Radio 4 quite early in the morning and know the shipping forecast for the following day! I have to confess that I now know more about the weather in places with unlikely names such as Dogger and Finistere.
3. Re-releasing the earlier recordings is looking more likely and with the re-mastering skills of John Daniels and the administrative support of Jackie at the office, we shall be in a position very shortly to explain how you can access those earlier albums such as 'Writing on the Wall' and 'Face to Face' in a modern format. Keep an eye on the website and watch out for notifications, particularly those of you who have written about those early recordings, and whose cassettes are now broken and vinyl badly scratched!
4. Prayer Fuel Website – Don't forget to visit our Prayer Fuel Website.

Visit www.flametrust.org for the latest news and event updates

It is passcoded and if you are unsure about access, drop a line to Jackie and she will explain how you can get regular updates from members of the Flame family who are facing challenge and health issues – as well as other features that occur in all of our lives for which we are able to solicit prayer support. Do make sure that you take a look

I cannot close without saying a big thank you to all of you who pray and give. Inevitably many of my prayer partners and regular donors have been 'promoted to glory', and we are seeing a weakening of our support base due to natural causes. I have been so privileged to have prayer partners since the early 70's – praying and giving regularly – and I am so grateful, but this year has seen a number of foundational supporters called home. Together with the demise of St James' House which also provided support for Calin and for Flame's ministry, we do need to be mindful that our financial resources will be stretched.

Please pray into this – Flame takes stewardship very seriously and although we are a faith organisation, we will not deviate from faith to risk. We are therefore looking as to how we can maintain and continue the support base for our ministry without extending our capability and absorbing un-commissioned responsibility. Thank you for your understanding here and for all your supportive gifts and prayers.

And finally, may I become one of the first to wish you a very Happy and Blessed Christmas. Thank you again for taking time to read all of this. May you also know God's blessing in your life and amongst those to whom you offer support, friendship and encouragement.

God bless

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve', with a horizontal line underneath it.

PS As you are aware, postal costs are rising. We are really keen to make sure we have all of our partners' email addresses for the occasions we could send updates this way. If you haven't already sent your email information to us, then that would really help when we have 'stop press' detail.