

Connect

Monday: Frontline - Welcomers and Hosts

My name is Jane, Married to Clive for 21 years, with our son Timothy studying Cybersecurity, we've been part of TBC for 13 years. Growing up in the north with an open-door home, I missed that deep connection after moving south. Clive's Parkinson's diagnosis shifted our plans to return north, leading me to intentionally seek 'home' here.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine became a pivotal moment. Hosting Viktorria and later Yulia highlighted the urgent need for community. I quickly created a WhatsApp group for hosts, which rapidly grew, connecting over 60 households supporting over 100 Ukrainians in Thornbury. Working alongside diverse hosts and witnessing the community's commitment deepened my sense of belonging. Our home became a welcoming space for all involved.

As Clive's condition progressed, a retirement course prompted reflection on our future. We began hosting dinner parties to build local connections. Recognizing potential isolation among newer residents, I started an Over 50's women's coffee club, which now thrives with over 100 members. I also find joy in supporting young mums.

In my younger years, I was dubbed the 'new person welcomer' – a role I found challenging but crucial. This encapsulates my core belief: as Christians, we must step beyond our comfort zones to love, listen, and support others. Ultimately, life's essence lies in connection and community, now and always.



Prayer points:

- Pray for those at church facing health challenges, especially with relationship changes due to illness.
- Pray for those nearing retirement to seek God's direction in their extra time—Abraham was 75 when commissioned!
- Ask God to show you ways to share His love and build community in church and Thornbury.

Tuesday: TBC Community Mission

Family Café welcomes families with preschool children three times a week during term time for play, refreshments and an opportunity to catch up or make new friends in a relaxed environment.

We are thrilled to be able to enjoy the new kitchen and toilets as well as the larger space now available to us in the main worship area. After a quieter season for café during the building works families are now steadily returning as well as new families coming along in the last few weeks.

Please pray for Family Café:

- For the 'chatterminglers' – the team that chat to folk during Café! That we may have wisdom to know when to listen, and when to speak, when to comfort or when to celebrate with these families.
- For some of the families that are facing difficulties at the moment, financial, relationships, poor physical or mental health. We've seen wonderful answers to prayers and we ask Lord for more!
- For the kitchen teams – that their continued welcoming and serving ministry communicates God's love to those who come along.
- Pray for us all as team as we pray and discern what the next steps may be for each of those that come to Café in terms of sharing the love of Jesus with them.

Wednesday: Local/UK Partners

I am **Myrtle Lawrence** and the Ministry that I help to lead, is with **Bristol Healing Rooms**, and the wider Community of Church Without Walls. The local area covered is the city of Bristol and surrounding areas, but as we also do online sessions regularly, we cover anywhere in the country or the world.

The local, city wide Ministry involves running healing sessions with many individuals, in mainly public halls. Leading worship, leading smaller groups, mentoring and discipling new Christians, and more world-wide mission trips, doing similar.

Thank you all for your support.

Prayer points for Bristol Healing Rooms:

- Spiritual protection, for myself, and for the big team.
- Time and energy to teach, mentor, and lead worship (I'm mentoring other worship teams too now).
- Strategies, vision and Wisdom from Holy Spirit.
- Finance for renting (and perhaps buying) buildings for our work.
- Provision for supporting team members living by faith, and those who are in need from the wider Community.

Thursday: World Mission Partners

Mircea and Ronela (Rock Of Ages): Our Ministry verse for 2024 was from 1 Peter 2:9: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; We have been called out from darkness to preach the Word to those who do not know Him, so they will be saved too!

These are the fruits of your prayers and support and the work God helped us to do throughout 2024:

- 162 souls prayed to receive the Lord into their hearts! Praise God for His mercy and grace!
- 3000 people heard the Gospel from our workers who has preached to them;
- 326 new persons began correspondence Bible courses;
- 474 New Testaments and 27 Bibles were given to the inmates;
- 4671 Bible studies were received at our headquarters;
- 5571 envelopes containing Bible studies were sent to the prisoners;
- 155 Inmates finished the Bible study;
- Over 51.000 km were driven safety to the prison to preach the Gospel!

Friday: Children @TBC

The **children's ministry** has faced a lot of disruptions and change over the past year due to the building work, but it has been wonderful to see the team pull together and work so hard towards making the children feel safe and loved regardless of the changing program and venues. Now we face more (good!) changes! It is so fantastic to have a new room for the Seedlings group to meet in (along with accessible toilet!) as well as the beautiful new creche which has been filling up fast! We are seeing more and more new faces as the term progresses, and it is an incredible opportunity for us as a church family to welcome God's children and share his love with them.

Prayer points for the Children's Work:

- As we grow, we find ourselves in need of more helpers in the primary aged groups. Please pray that God will stir the hearts of those gifted in this area to join the team.
- For the teams who put so much love and care into the lessons they prepare. Pray that God will provide the time they need to plan each week.
- We regularly have children coming along from broken homes or foster care families. Please pray that God will protect these children and that we will be able to share his love with them in a way that makes sense to them.

Saturday: Global Needs

Pray particularly this month:

- For the current tensions internationally as policies are set and deals are made.
- For the persecuted Christians being driven out of Bangladesh.
- Continue to pray for Gaza, Ukraine and the many other places of conflict around the world. We pray particularly as Gaza and Ukraine become the focus of peace talks.
- For the millions of African Christians displaced due to violence.
- For the natural disasters, like the earthquake in Myanmar.

Find more up-to-date prayer items for Christians suffering for their faith in the 'Latest News' section of the Open Doors website (opendoorsuk.org).

Healing and Comfort

Please use the weekly updated list of prayer needs sent out in the weekly notice sheet.

If you are concerned about someone who needs care or support, contact Paul Ferguson -
paul@thornburybaptistchurch.org.uk

Sunday: Renewal

Resurrection Life

Risen Christ, when darkness overwhelms me,

may your dawn beckon.

When fear paralyses me
may your touch release me.

When grief torments me
may your peace enfold me.

When memories haunt me
may your presence heal me.

When justice fails me
may your anger ignite me.

When apathy stagnates me
may your challenge renew me.

When courage leaves me
may your spirit inspire me.

When despair grips me
may your hope restore me.

And when death threatens me
may your resurrection light lead me.

Amen.

Annabel Shilson-Thomas/CAFOD

Is God speaking?

If as you pray through Connect, you sense God speaking to us as a church family, do pass your thoughts to the elders.