The Chalmers Family April 2021

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Who would have thought that this month we have been in a global pandemic for 12 months now, and still having to live with so many restrictions and being unable to spend time with friends and family after so long? Everyone has had to make sacrifices to stay safe and learn to adapt to the situation that we have found ourselves in. It has been a very difficult year and people have coped, or not, to various degrees. Thankfully God knew all about this from the very beginning and has used these times to stretch us, challenge us, stir us up and hopefully we have all learned so much about ourselves and how we can take many things for granted.

Don't close this newsletter yet! It not going to be a depressing and negative read but exactly the opposite! We want to show you how God has moved and led us on, particularly these past few months, and it is exciting!

Everyone has had to learn how to adjust to a different way of living and that goes through every area of our lives, including church and ministry. In many ways our work has increased, as in needs have risen due to people not being able to continue working and being in lock-down. As you know Matthew 25 is what we base our whole ministry on and we have always believed that we cannoit just say to someone who is dire need that we will pray for them and walk away. We have to meet that need as much as we are able to and show the Gospel of Jesus Christ in action, then we can speak to them about how much God loves them and wants to be part of their lives in a personal way. This year we believe that God has been saying 'Look what is in your hand? Use it!' Scary when you know things have to be done so very differently and not being able to use modern platforms like Zoom, etc as the people here don't always have access to the internet and certainly not the people who come to church.

Like you we have had to do things differently and we have learned so much and has shown us the amazing possibilities of reaching people more than ever before, so that when things do return to some sort of 'normality', there is room for the old and new in every area.

We hope that you will be encouraged and as excited as we are when you read some of the things that have been happening.....and see through the pictures we post.









Christmas was AMAZING! We couldn't visit the school as it was closed and we couldn't have the parties here, etc due to the restrictions BUT we were able to go to the people! We dressed the cars up with lights, tinsel, packed full of presents that we had received to give out and this year Father Christmas drove around the village rather than walk all with a mask under his beard. We arranged to be in certain places around the village at specific times and we met with the children and parents. Yes, it was hard work getting everything arranged to run smoothly and safely, but it was THE most amazing time!!!

This year we received 250 wrapped selection boxes and pencil cases from Langley Mill in Derbyshire as they were not able to send shoe boxes this year due to lockdown but they sent lots of toys and clothing. We had also been saving the toys and items that we have been receiving throughout the year from the pallets we received from North Wales. All of these were given out plus 200 carrier bags of toys. It was God in abundance!





Adults came to their gates when they heard the music, and Father Christmas, aka Alex, gave a selection box to an elderly lady and she burst into tears. She never receives anything for Christmas and a gift given in love meant so much! We have since seen that lady again when it was ladies' day and were able to bless here again.







As we said needs have risen and there has never been a week gone by where we have not had to buy food for people. The amazing thing with this is we can count on the one hand how many people asked for help. God would speak to us, or give us an impression, that people needed help and when we took it to them they were so overwhelmed as many of them had no food in the house and didn't know what they were going to do and how to survive with no money, no work and no food.

Our Christmas meal as a church still happened, but in takeaway format. Everyone was given a traditional Christmas hot meal away with them, and for their families, and we were able to bless other people with hot meal who we know are in need.

The Children's work has continued but again in a different way. Every 2 weeks we take activities to the children with tasks for them to complete, and if they can send us a picture of it completed, we give them a certificate and small prize. If they collect 5 certificates of one particular subject eg, art or craft then they will receive a badge to put on a hat that we will give them when we can all meet together again. Even the clubs have grown, and we are giving out to around 40 children every 2 weeks. It is fantastic! The other great thing about visiting them at home is that we meet the parents and can chat with them and have opportunities to pray with them.







Another part of the work that has grown this last year is the work with the ladies. Over the last couple of years this had really started to grow and we were really concerned about what impact the restrictions would have on it. We prayed and God showed us again to 'use what we had in our hand'. At Christmas we gave out 30 Christmas gifts and craft to the ladies and then for Mother's Day in March we met with 57 ladies and gave them a small gift with a card. This is definitely one of the areas that God has shown us that there is room to meet together but also to go and visit the ladies, where they are, and have that opportunity to talk to them and build a relationship with them. Sometimes someone just needs a listening ear and a kind word.

Most of the time we have been able to have church services, keeping to the restrictions, and the times we haven't been able to meet physically, we have taken some verses from scriptures printed out for them and some questions for them to think about what they are reading. It is different but we have seen God move and that is the most important thing.



As we said we can't use Zoom, or internet for church here, but we have been so BLESSED this year with being to to join churches services, via Zoom, in the UK every Sunday, a ladies prayer meeting every week and many video calls with people. We have experienced more 'fellowship' this last year than we have had since we came here. It has strengthened us and encouraged us so much. We really hope and pray that these can all continue to some extent when we get back into churches again.



We haven't shared much about family at the moment but if you are part of our prayer page on FB you can see there have been a few things recently, one of them is that we have both been ill, particularly Alex , but thankfully we are both on the mend.

Elena was very ill for several weeks to the point of having to have IV fluids as she was so dehydrated and actually lost 14kgs in weight. The picture will explain why!

On the 10th August, Andrew and Elena, are expecting their first baby!! Elena is keeping well now and has started to enjoy her pregnancy now. It is all very exciting!



We have given you snippets of what has been going on and how God has been moving. It has not been easy at all and there have been really difficult times and heart breaking times, but we promised you a positive newsletter and hope you have been encouraged because everyone of you is a part of the work here. Your generosity in EVERY area makes all of these things possible, enabling us to follow the vision that God has given us and your prayer support is so important. So, thank you so much!!

Please keep in touch as we love to hear from you, and we pray for you all also. Thank you for partnering with us here in Poiana,

Love and Blessings, *Alex and Heather*

We are totally supported by the the giving of others to continue the work here.

If you are able to give in any way towards the work here, either as a one-off donation, or a SO then please one any of the options below and THANK YOU!!!

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